THE DICKENSIAN — AUTUMN NUMBER
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# WHEN FOUND—

HERE is the eighth number of *The Dickensian* edited and printed under actual attack by the enemy. There is very little difference about it, except that it has four pages less than the first one ; but the present size is greater than that prevailing prior to 1926. In the good years that followed the size of the magazine was increased fifty per cent. without increase in price ; in these difficult times, the next number may be only half this size or it may not appear at all ! It all depends on *you.*

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**Our Future.** My appeal on this page six months ago to overseas branches for more support has by no means fallen on barren ground. It is the fertile soil of those branches whose subscription includes the cost of the magazine, that has responded, although my appeal was not of course specially directed to them.

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**Barren Ground.** It is those branches whose subscriptions do not include the cost of *The Dickensian* that have proved to be barren ground ; many of them have not troubled to take any notice of my appeal. When some ten years ago, or more, a new rule was passed requiring all new branches to include the cost of the magazine in their subscription, several of the existing branches decided to fall in line, and increased their subscriptions accordingly ; but others apparently feared that they would lose members by any raising of the subscription by even half a dollar. These were mostly branches whose members were inspired not so much by love of Dickens but with the idea, apparently, of organising a social society using the magic name of Dickens as an attraction.

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**The Dickensian A Joke !** I heard from one such the other day, in a private letter from a member of the Branch Committee to whom I had specially written. He brought the matter up at the Committee, as the branch had so few subscribers to *The Dickensian.* " Most of the committee," he writes, " seemed disposed to treat your letter as a joke ; one member actually asked, ' who reads *The Dickensian* any way, except Mr. X ? ' [my correspondent]. That was my clue, and I told them what I thought of the support our branch gave the magazine. The small number of subscribers (eleven, I think) showed that not even the members of the committee subscribed."

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**A Change must come.** This is not an isolated case, and the matter will have to be remedied in the happier days to come, for it is absurd that people should hold important positions on committees of large branches, and yet not be sufficiently interested in

the main object of the society they help to control, to become subscribers to their own magazine. Drastic changes will have to be made in the days ahead; such changes are long overdue. There are certain branches of the Fellowship that are entirely out of harmony with the Fellowship. These, as I have already pointed out in these pages, have truncated our Aims and Objects, to suit their own ideas and purposes; one of the oldest used to boast a membership of one thousand, and their sole object was charity (which may have been Dickensian, but was not Dickens); they collected one shilling from each of a thousand people to provide and maintain a cot in the local hospital and enrolled them as members of the Dickens Fellowship! How absurd this was is shown by the fact that after a year or two, at an annual meeting (they did not hold any other meetings during the year) one subscriber objected that twopence of his shilling should be sent to London as the branch fee. And so these citizens had subscribed their shillings to a hospital and not to the Dickens Fellowship, and then passed a resolution seceding from the Fellowship!!

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**Silver Lining.** But, however, there are encouraging signs. From Palos Verdes, a small and fairly new branch on the Californian coast, we have received the following: "Our branch has always included subscriptions to *The Dickensian* in our annual dues, and every member finds it most interesting and enjoyable. We admire the courage with which you are carrying on in these trying times, and are sending a money order for ten dollars as our bit toward its continued publication."

The same story comes from Vancouver, an older branch which some years ago voluntarily adopted the system of "Inclusive Subscriptions." "We are trying to increase our membership," they write, "and meantime send you a donation of £5 to secure the continuity of such an invaluable magazine as *The Dickensian*."

The Boston branch was, I believe, the very first branch of the Fellowship to include *The Dickensian* as a part of the subscription. They too, unasked, are sending a substantial donation to the general funds of the magazine. "It is a most important part of the Fellowship. It must not be allowed to discontinue for lack of funds. It is nothing short of magical that you are able to get *The Dickensian* out on time as you do; and it is appreciated the more under the circumstances." We are not given to blow our own little tin trumpet very often, but with these last remarks we most heartily concur!

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Here, then, is testimony from the people who know, the only opinion worth having; but there are signs that some of the backward branches are sitting up and taking notice. Winnipeg—a live branch to judge from newspaper reports of its activities, but sadly deficient in its appreciation of its own magazine, reports that it has doubled the number of its subscribers to *The Dickensian*. This is a good start. Keep on doubling, and you will soon overtake your membership. Edmonton (Alberta) also doubles its already fairly large support, and hopes next

year to make the subscription include the magazine. Hamilton (Ontario) also say that they hope to get every member next year to subscribe to the magazine, "and thus show our appreciation of its value." Thank you, Hamilton; but why not go "the whole hog" while you are about it, and fix a subscription to include the magazine? your members only want a lead!

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Montreal, the largest North American Branch, is still very diffident about taking the plunge. That they are fully alive to the position is apparent from the fact that they have written to all the other American branches on the subject. In future they will advertise two subscriptions, $3 with *The Dickensian* and $2 without. Many branches have done this for years; I hope Montreal will be more successful than these others have been; but I have my doubts. Experience has taught me that the only way to tackle the problem is to have a minimum subscription, which includes a copy of the magazine post free each quarter. In addition, they could have a family subscription to cover more than one member of a family at the same address; in their case it would be $5 for two members, $7 for three, and so on; one magazine only being posted to each household.

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**Come on, Australasia.** And now, what about Australian branches? I have not yet heard from them. All three New Zealand branches were formed under the new rule: every member has the magazine, and they are in a flourishing condition. A few days ago I received a letter from Christchurch, expressing their "appreciation and gratitude for the publication of *The Dickensian* during the war period." They add "Our members look forward to receive it, and quite frankly and openly express their admiration of the spirit that must prompt its regular publication and despatch at this time." That's the spirit! Would that there were more branches like Christchurch.

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**The Reason.** Here is an extract from a letter which I received from a friend who is a member of a U.S. branch:

> "I must tell you about the Birthday Dinner. We had it at the place we generally have it, a lovely dining room. . . . I don't know how many were present, but we always have a large attendance at all our public functions. I think it proves a great many people are interested in Dickens one way or another, than belong to our branch. It is such a pity they don't join us."

I fully agree. Do you know why these Dickens lovers don't join you? Don't be hurt if I am too outspoken; this is the time for plain speaking. Your average member is not a true Dickensian; so the real Dickens lover has nothing in common with the member of the branch except once a year to honour the Birthday with a well-attended dinner. On what grounds do I make this statement? In the first place, your branch has over 80 members, yet only *three* people subscribe to *The*

*Dickensian*; the remainder simply do not want to be bothered with it as they are not at all interested in its contents. I notice too that the greater part of your monthly meetings are more of a social nature than Dickensian; not a single lecture on Dickens, the mainstay of the meetings being readings and short dramatic representations. These are all right in their way; but a real Dickensian wants something better than dramatic sketches at every meeting. Forty members really interested in Dickens make a better branch than double the number who are not.

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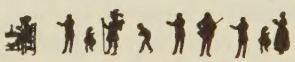
*E. V. Lucas declared that "The Dickensian" was "a monument—a finer testimony to the glory and honour of its subject than any bronze or marble could be." You are not going to let Nazi Germany destroy that monument!*

WALTER DEXTER.



## *PICKWICK* IN WAR TIME

To the classic story of von Moltke reading the latest number of *Little Dorrit* outside the walls of Paris in 1870 must be added at least two others recalled by a writer in the "West African Review" for June last in an article, "Pickwick and a Prussian," based on the story told by the London "Star." It runs that Lieut.-General Sir James Marshall-Cornwall, one of the best linguists in the Army, was the first British military attaché in Berlin after the Great War; he got to know various leading German personalities, and on one occasion he made an interesting discovery. Strolling in a park, he saw a German officer of his acquaintance sitting on a bench, laughing heartily over a book he was reading. Sir James went over to him and asked what the book was. The officer held out the volume to him. It was *Pickwick*, in English. The officer was the present Marshal von Blomberg.

The other relates to the Boer War days and is told of the Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr. An English friend ventured the remark that he hoped, despite the war, that Hofmeyr had never given up hope that the English-speaking and the Dutch-speaking South Africans would after the war still get back the rhythm and the relationship due to intermarriage and identity of religious faith. "Well," the South African statesman replied, "I won't say I don't despair of it at times, but when I do I curl up in the club library and read *Pickwick* again."

## LONDON MEETINGS

THE meetings in London, rambles, and lectures continued until July. They will be resumed on September 27th (Saturday), when Mr. G. H. Stuart-Bunning will address the members on "*Pickwick* as Satire." There will also be lectures on October 25th and November 22nd. The place of meeting is the Central Club, Y.W.C.A., Great Russell Street, W.C.1, and the time 2.30 p.m.

The Birthday falling on a Saturday, arrangements are in hand for its celebration by a luncheon.

# THE DICKENS WORLD AND ITS MESSAGE*

BY LEO MASON

I.

LET me preface my remarks by three quotations. The first is taken from "The Contemporary Review" for February 1869; the second appeared shortly after Dickens's death, in "The Victoria Magazine"; and the third was written by Mowbray Morris in "The Fortnightly Review" more than twelve years later.

> "We are introduced (in his writings) to a state of things quite inconsistent with fact—a world peopled by grotesque impossibilities. Mr. Dickens's genius seems to us essentially akin to that of the farce-writer and the caricaturist."
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> "The best tribute we can render to his memory is the reading of his works, with an enlarged, charitable and humble mind, in something of the spirit in which they were written, and alive to the truth, that, however gifted to amuse, and successful in amusing, sad teaching was the refrain and object of the great author."
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> "Harsh as it may seem to say, whatever his writings may actually have done to reduce the sum of human suffering will tell against rather than for them. It will always be so with those who employ fiction, for the purpose of some particular social or political reformation, for the wrongs they help to remove, and the evils they help to redress, will seem slight and unreal in the pages of fiction, because they have so long ceased to form a part of actual existence. It is inevitable that much of Dickens's serious and sentimental work will have for future generations neither the attraction nor the solidity that it had for its own."

At the age of twenty-four Dickens gave the world a unique book; it was acclaimed as the work of a man of genius; it placed him at one bound upon the uppermost point of the pillar of fame. To-day more than a hundred years later, the star of his fame shines out with undimned brightness. Mr. Pickwick came into the world at a time when the door of political freedom had just been thrown open to the middle classes, a spirit of enquiry was abroad; the condition of the masses left much to be desired; many things needed reforming. The times were opportune for someone to point the way to a New Order of life. Charles Dickens was of the people; he had lived and worked amongst the poor; he was acutely conscious of their miserable condition. He felt with his whole soul that they were the victims of grave injustices. By his own endeavours he raised himself up from a lowly state and became a champion of the common man. This zeal for reform might have led him to form a party which could have produced a Dictatorship; he might have become a great lay preacher —he became something immeasurably greater. In the very early days of his literary career this zeal for reform was not particularly self-evident. *The Pickwick Papers* is primarily a work of pure humour not devised with a view to providing anything but entertaining reading,

* Chairman's address at the Annual Conference, London, 7th June, 1941.

but having assembled by means of his God-given genius, a very large audience, he started to deliver his message. *Oliver Twist*, commenced before *Pickwick* ended, was the first of a long series of the novel with a purpose. The Poor Law, the common law, the criminal law, parliamentary systems, public institutions, prisons, hospitals, schools, education, child welfare, housing, sanitation, industrial conditions, in fact anything which could be associated with the masses of the people was the food for his pen. He was steadfast of purpose—a reformer to the end. He was a Dictator to the end in that he did not allow himself to be sidetracked from his purpose; but, he shed not a drop of blood; he did an immeasurable amount of good, because he sent out his message in unforgettable form in the pages of his novels. His reforming zeal alone would not have made Dickens the power he became.

Sermons are excellent things, but men as a rule do not care to be preached at; they cannot be bothered to listen; they much prefer to be amused, thrilled or entertained. Bald statement of fact and cold statistics are unromantic, uninteresting and uninspiring things. Dickens knew the trend of the middle class mind; he knew that it liked to be jollied along; he presented the bitter pill disguised under a liberal coating of sugar. His observation, naturally keen, had been sharpened by his training; he had a photographic eye, a wonderful memory, an overflowing sense of humour and a glorious imagination which enabled him to create characters—men and women more real than living men—characters who possessed qualities known in real life but never before depicted; and characters made up of purely hypothetical qualities so skilfully adapted to the circumstances which surround them that our sense of fitness is not offended, and we find ourselves wondering why we have not met such people in actual life. And as these creatures talk and go about their ways, we muse in uncontrollable delight over thoughts which, while we wonder we have never hit upon them before, we have to admit that we never have encountered. Dickens's wand is that of the enchanter. He created a world of his own and peopled it with robbers, thieves, beadles, red-nosed clerics; twisters, deceivers, receivers, believers; schemers, dreamers, tight-fisted squeezers; soldiers, sailors, tinkers, tailors; nagging wives, henpecked husbands; teachers, preachers, lodging house keepers; kind, noble and generous-hearted bachelors, very acid spinsters; nurses who were drinkers; doctors, lawyers, artists and boarders; boys and girls, dwarfs and giants; coach drivers and misers, actors and actresses; infant phenomena, dupes and nincompoops; bigbugs, little bugs, don't forget the humbugs! And so the list might be extended—there seemed no limit to his creative genius.

And yet it has been objected that his creations are nothing but monstrous caricatures, grotesque impossibilities living in a state of things quite inconsistent with fact. Whatever they are we must admit that they are far more interesting than many of the people we meet in life; people who make no impression on us at all; people whom we don't much care if we never meet again. It isn't so with the

characters of Dickens; what a pleasure it is to meet Mr. Micawber, Mr. Pickwick, Sam Weller, Mr. Pecksniff, Mrs. Nickleby. When having a gill in the vaults of some obscure pub, how ready we should be, on noticing Mrs. Gamp coming through the swing doors, to escort her to a snug corner and ply her with drops of gin for the pleasure of hearing her talk. Dickens's characters, good and bad, are all endowed with the saving grace of humour; they force us to accompany them to their respective haunts. "If you want to know me, you must come and live with me," is an old saying; this is just what a Dickens character induces us to do, and in this manner does Dickens impart his message, and induce us to swallow the bitter pill.

We do not feel any difficulty in accepting and adapting ourselves to their company because Dickens drew his characters from life as a painter draws inspiration from the model; but like all creative artists he endowed them with some quality of his genius which uplifts them from the commonplace and glorifies them. Commonplace people and things are invested with a new and compelling interest by him. Dickens intensifies and enlarges our field of vision; hidden-away characteristics, virtues and vices are brought out in bold relief; never again shall we see our fellow men in the old dim light—we shall say to ourselves this or that individual reminds us of a Dickens character.

II.

But in considering his characters we have to remember that much of the success of Dickens lies not so much in his characters as such, but in the manner in which he brings them out. The reader sees all the characters and scenes in the story and, in addition, hears a running commentary from the lips of some unseen commentator which makes all things real and intelligible. This hidden voice becomes the soul of all. It must be obvious that when his novels are reduced to mere scenes and libretto, this accompanying spirit voice must be lost. Dickens the novelist appeared fully to realize this, because Dickens the reader, eschewing the help of scenery, costumes, wigs and mechanical contrivances, presented his scenes and characters in vivid dramatic readings from his works and thus preserved the hidden voice, the soul of all, the soul of Dickens himself. It would appear then that the only way to appreciate the true Dickens is to read him. If we will but take the trouble to signify whither and with whom we wish to travel, whether it be with Mr. Pickwick, Wilkins Micawber, David Copperfield, Little Dorrit, Oliver Twist or Sydney Carton, the spirit of Dickens released a little over a hundred years ago will hasten to our side and carry us into the land of the immortals. There we shall discover the answer to the cry of the poet; we shall see ourselves as others see us. We may see in Mr. Pecksniff some portion of ourselves, our friends and our acquaintances; it will not do to say, this man is but a caricature; he is too alive for that! If his cap fits us we must put it on. Some might see themselves in Scrooge, others in Mrs. Jellaby; some poor creature may recognize herself in the wife of the out-of-work boilermaker, who made jackets (she received 10½d. for

making a jacket, she could make *one* if she worked hard in about two days) or perhaps in one of those cellars which would seem to have been established by humane individuals as refuges for destitute bugs, there might be a Fanny Cleaver.

In this land of Dickens we shall be confronted with every phase and condition of life. Sometimes we shall be moved to uproarious laughter; sometimes we shall be moved to shame; sometimes we shall be moved to tears. At times we shall be taken into bright and cheery places; at times into dark and noisome dens. We shall return to this land of mortals, cheered, chastened, more enlightened men, better able to appreciate and gauge the true measure of our worth. We shall see a new significance in the people and things about us. We shall have carried away with us a little of that spirit of Dickens; we shall have a little more true charity in our hearts. On the 9th of June, 1870, Charles Dickens died; his mortal remains were laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, amid, we are told, the tears of the sorrowing millions whose lives he had brightened and made better by his magic gifts.

When he first took up pen a little over a hundred years ago, a new spirit of enquiry was abroad; the people were beginning to demand a New Deal. Dickens devoted his genius to a lofty purpose, the cause of humanity; many injustices and abuses were brought to light in the pages of his novels; many of his readers were amazed, they marvelled that such things could be.

A hundred years later the descendants of those same people are embroiled in a world-shattering war. In this dear old England of ours certain abuses have been forcibly brought to light; one half the nation has suddenly been confronted with the conditions under which the other half have lived; they have been amazed that such a state of things could have existed; men are once again demanding a new deal —a new order; they are debating, wondering, what best to tackle first.

We might ask in requoting from our several critiques, would not this generation of men, with so called calmer opinions, a somewhat different code of taste and a very different sense of humour, do well to pause and consider whether it is really inevitable that much of Dickens's serious work cannot have the force of meaning in these days as it had in those of his own. Can it be that, after all, he did only introduce us to a state of things quite inconsistent with fact—a world peopled by grotesque impossibilities. Or can it be that he gave us an enlarged vision of life—a magnified world peopled with beings more real than living men who reflect the virtues, vices, strengths and weaknesses of men throughout the recurring years and have a message to impart to this generation as to that of Dickens's own. For the fundamental principles underlying the creation of a successful New Order are virtually the same as those so clearly set forth in the Message of Dickens, and imparted to the successive generations of mankind through the product of his genius—the host of Dickens characters who strut their never ending hour upon the stage—the mighty Stage he set up between the covers of his novels.

# TOM HILL

By LESLIE C. STAPLES

AMONG the treasures of the Dickens House is a lace-edged place-card bearing the name of Thomas Hill. It was so inscribed to mark the place of a guest at the dinner given by Dickens to celebrate the conclusion of the publication of *Pickwick*. Accompanying it is the letter of invitation in Dickens's own hand.

The accounts of this, the first of those famous celebration-dinners, are very meagre, and we have to rely chiefly upon the description of it in a letter of Harrison Ainsworth to his friend, James Crossley. In addition to the Vice-Chairman, Serjeant Talfourd, "one or two private friends" and the printers, publishers and engravers, only six guests are named: Tom Hill, Jerdan, Forster, Macready, Dickens's father and his father-in-law. Thus it will be seen that Hill must have held no inconsiderable place in Dickens's regard. Moreover, we find Dickens writing later: "I could not possibly dispense with your company at my Nickleby Dinner." This was a few months after he had sent Hill a present of the first edition of *Oliver Twist*, and there survive several invitations to dine at Doughty Street, couched in cordial terms, and a copy of *Nicholas Nickleby* inscribed "From his faithfully, Charles Dickens."

Now let us see who and what manner of man he was. Born at Lancaster in 1760, Tom Hill came to London at an early age and established himself in business as a drysalter at Queenhythe. Here he lived for many years and was visited by many of the leading writers of the day, for he was greatly interested in books, the theatre, the fashionable world, and much else. It was here also that he laid the foundations of his very considerable library. Accounts vary as to his literary ability. Lockhart says that he was "the most innocent and ignorant of bibliomaniacs." Yet after reading Bloomfield's "Farmer's Boy" in manuscript, he was the means of securing its publication, and he was also largely instrumental in bringing the works of Kirke White before the public. He took to publishing later and became part proprietor of "The Monthly Mirror." It was in this capacity that Southey made allusion to him as "a gentleman who is himself a lover of English literature and who has probably the most copious collection of English poetry in existence." As to his private character, there is abundant evidence to show that he was generally loved as a good-natured, highly eccentric and most amusing little gossip. We have an entertaining picture of George Colman the Younger hoaxing him with a threat of writing a comedy around him, to be entitled "The Literary Drysalter, or The Mæcenas of Queenhythe."

He later lived at Henrietta Street, Strand, where he entertained his ever widening circle of friends. The Kembles often dined with him here, habitually doing so on the nights of their first performances, going directly thence to the theatre. At that time he also had a cottage at Sydenham, and his "Sydenham Sundays" were remembered and described with obvious pleasure by Mrs. Charles Mathews

in her Memoirs of her husband. Besides themselves, she tells us of many interesting guests to be met there—the Kembles, Liston, Theodore Hook, Campbell the poet, who lived hard by, Leigh Hunt and his brother, James and Horace Smith, John Taylor, editor of "The Sun," Horace Twiss, Barron Field, Edward Dubois, and many others.

About 1810 Hill lost heavily in a business speculation in indigo, and he retired to second floor chambers at 2 James Street, Adelphi, where he remained for the rest of his long and merry life.

Thus it will be seen that he was a great age when Dickens knew him in the late thirties; indeed, he was then considered quite a Methuselah. James Smith said that it was impossible to discover his age because his parish register had been consumed in the Great Fire of London, and he took advantage of the circumstance to conceal the year of his nativity. Theodore Hook capped this with a "Pooh! Pooh!", one of Hill's characteristic exclamations, "he's one of the little Hills that are spoken of as skipping in the Psalms." Further, we read that "As a mere octogenarian he was wonderful enough. No human being would from his appearance, gait or habits, have guessed him to be sixty. Till within three months of his death he rose at five usually and brought the materials for his breakfast home from Billingsgate, and at dinner he would eat and drink like an adjutant of five and twenty. One secret was that a 'banyan day' uniformly followed a festivity. He then nursed himself most carefully on tea and dry toast, tasted neither meat nor wine and went to bed by eight o'clock. But perhaps the grand secret was the easy imperturbable serenity of his temper. He had been kind and generous in the days of his wealth, and though his evening was comparatively poor, his cheerful heart kept its even beat."

How he maintained himself after the failure of his business is a subject about which, using a phrase constantly on his lips, no one "happened to know" but himself. One may hazard a guess, however, at one source of his depleted income. At this time a particularly rabid epidemic of Bibliomania raged in England, when books, which had only become scarce because they were always worthless, were purchased solely on account of that scarcity.

Hill had always been an assiduous collector of such books, and not an injudicious one so far as their market price was concerned. Taste appreciates works of art, collectors appraise them: this was Hill's province, and he could tell you pretty accurately how much each copy would bring at an auction and how much it had brought at all previous auctions. This was a species of information that he did "happen to know."

Anxious to embark upon so lucrative a branch of their business, Longmans applied to Hill for advice and assistance, with the result that they bought from him three or four trunk loads of such books for as many thousand pounds.

His assistance was also sought by Perry, the proprietor of "The Morning Chronicle," when the latter was forming a library at Tavistock House, later the home of Dickens.

A most amusing sketch of Hill is to be found in "A greybeard's gossip about his literary acquaintances," which appeared in the "New Monthly Magazine" in 1847 and which is worth quoting:

> "In addition to Hill's besetting sin of imagining that all his own geese and all the geese of all his friends were swans, he was an inexhaustible gossip, delighting more especially to startle his hearers by the marvellous nature of his intelligence, not troubling his head about its veracity, for he was a great economist of truth, and striving to beat down and crush every doubt by ever increasing vehemence of manner and extravagance of assertion. If you strained at a gnat he would instantly give you a camel to swallow; if you boggled at an improbability he would endeavour to force an impossibility down your throat, rising with the conscious necessity for exertion, for he was wonderfully demonstrative, until his veins swelled, his grey eyes boggled, his husky voice became inarticulate, his hands were stretched out with widely parted fingers and the first joint of each thumb was actually drawn backwards in the muscular tension occasioned by this excitement. Embody this description in a figure of a fat, florid, round little man like a retired elderly cupid and you will see Hill maintaining a hyperbole with as much convulsive energy as if he believed it! And yet it is difficult to suppose, that deceived by his own excitement and mistaking assertion for conviction, he did not sometimes succeed in imposing upon himself however he might fail with his hearers, otherwise he would hardly wind up, as I have more than once heard him, by exclaiming 'Sir, I affirm it with all the solemnity of a death bed utterance of a sacramental oath.' Blinded by agitation and vehemence he could no longer see truth and went on asseverating until he fancied that he believed what he was saying. This, however, was in the more rampant stage of the disorder; there was a previous one in which he would look you sternly in the face and in a tone that was meant to be conclusive and to inflict a death blow upon all incredulity, would emphatically ejaculate, 'Sir, I happen to know it.'
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> "It was a standing joke with his friends to decoy him into some extravagant statement which 'he happened to know'; to see him lash himself into fury as he attempted to flounder and bluster out of the meshes in which he became every moment more deeply entangled; and to mark the quietude with which he would finally desert the falsehood for which he had battled so fiercely and entrench himself in some totally irrelevant truism that he knew to be unassailable."

It is scarcely surprising that writers of contemporary fiction frequently drew upon their knowledge of Tom Hill in the description of odd character. He was said to be the original of Paul Pry in the farce of that name made famous by the acting of Liston, although Poole, the author, always stoutly denied it. The same author's scarcely less famous Jack Hobbleday in "Little Peddlington" was also said to betray more than a touch of Tom Hill. But it was as Hull in "Gilbert Gurney" that Lockhart says "the good-natured, harmless little gossip was painted to the life by Theodore Hook." The passages referring to Hull were read to Hill before publication and caused him the greatest satisfaction. The two I quote bring him vividly before us.

" His plump rosy cheeks were purpled with warmth and kindness as he held out his hand to take mine and protested that I was the very man he wanted most to see. Hull was a very extraordinary person. He knew the business of everybody in London better than the people themselves. He 'happened to know' everything that was going forward in all circles—mercantile, political, fashionable, literary or theatrical; in addition to all matters connected with military and naval affairs, agriculture, finance, art, and science—everything alike came to him—to his inquiring eye no mystery continued undiscovered, from his attentive ear no secret remained concealed. He was plump, short—with an intelligent countenance and near-sighted—with a constitution and complexion fresh enough to look forty at a time when *I* believed him to be at least four times that age; we had a joke against him in those days as to his antiquity in which he heartily and good-naturedly joined, until at last we got him to admit—and I almost think believe—that he sold gunpowder to King Charles the Second and dined more than once with the witty old Lord Rochester.

" 'Wanted you to come and meet a few friends at my cottage at Mitcham,' said Hull, 'all plain and simple—good wine, I promise you and pleasant company. . . .'

" 'Here,' said he, drawing from one of his pockets a very small dirty black-letter book, 'this is all I shall do to-day. My pursuit you know—eh!—old books—rare books. I don't care *what* I give so long as I can secure them. This is a tract of 1486—seventeen pages originally—five only wanting—two damaged—got it for seventy-two pounds ten shillings—Caxton—only one other copy extant—that in the British Museum.' . . . 'And what is it about?' I asked innocently. 'Why, I do not happen to know that,' said Hull. . . . 'Then why buy it?' said I. 'Buy,' exclaimed he, looking at me through his glass, 'I buy thousands of books. Pooh! pooh! Millions, my dear sir, in the course of a year, but I never think of reading them. My dear friend, I have no time to read!' "

In 1836 Hill narrowly escaped even greater fame. In that year Harrison Ainsworth was planning a new novel to be published in the usual monthly parts and to be entitled " The Lions of London," and illustrated by George Cruikshank and John Leech. In this work it was Ainsworth's intention to present a vivid contrast of subjects—a tragic historical novel combined with humour of the Pickwickian style with which Dickens was at that time achieving enormous popularity. For the latter element Ainsworth intended to introduce Tom Hill. Writing to the proposed publisher, John Macrone, Ainsworth advises—"Another suggestion and this refers to George Cruikshank. In addition to the figures I have suggested, I wish him to introduce, as entering my old gentleman's chamber, Thomas Hill, Esq. (*in propria persona*) or, as I shall call him, 'Tom Vale.' If George has not seen him, you can, you can get the sketch from Fraser's Magazine; but introduced he must be, as I mean to carry him out triumphantly and to make him play the part of 'Mr. Weller' to my story. I wish George, therefore, to give the portrait as exactly as possible, as I am sure his character will be a hit. Don't let Tom get wind of it in the meantime.

. . . . I have made a beginning with Tom to-day, and small though it is, I will know no pause till I come to an end . . . And now adieu to the Lions for a few days."

But it was "good-bye," however, for Ainsworth found that with "Crichton" already on his hands, he could not do justice to himself with a second story simultaneously. The plan was to have been revived later, but the death of Macrone brought it to an end, although

doubtless the more serious part of the design was later embodied in "The Tower of London."*

Poor Tom Hill died in December, 1840, in his eighty-first year, and was buried in the vaults of St. Martins-in-the-Fields. His library was sold by auction in the following March, and we find Dickens and Forster among the purchasers, for the former writes to his friend: "I have done nothing to-day but cut the Swift, looking into it with a delicious laziness in all manner of delightful places, and put poor Tom's books away."

Hill had considerably repaired his fortunes since his failure in 1810, for he left £15,000. The sole beneficiary was Edward Dubois, for he had no near relative. Cyrus Redding tells us that he had no other motive for so doing beyond his appreciation of their frequent dinings on fine Sundays at the Spaniards and Jack Straw's Castle at Hampstead, but possibly the fact that Dubois had for long edited "The Monthly Mirror" for him had something to do with it.

Enough material has now been assembled to demonstrate that such an odd and attractive character as Tom Hill would have a strong appeal for Dickens. Luckily we have confirmation of the fact in Dickens's own hand in a letter to that same Edward Dubois. The diary mentioned has, unhappily, not so far come to light.

Devonshire Terrace
April the Second 1841.

My Dear Sir, -Thank you for your letter of yesterday. I was a *leetle* startled when I first went to Evans's, by the autographic department of the catalogue, but a moment's reflection assured me that the Executors had no choice in the matter; for those who have a gratification in preserving such things during their lives usually contemplate their sale at some distant time and have a pleasure in anticipating the little bustle it will make.

You are quite right in your philosophy. The pooh-poohers and Lord Burleighs have it hollow, all the world through—but we won't allow Hill to have been one of that kind.

He used to tell me often that he had kept a diary for—I am afraid to say how many years, but I know it was a great number. I am looking forward with great expectation to your publishing it. I have in my mind's eye at this minute the expression of face, with which he told me he intended it to see the light—an unfathomable face—with something of John Murray hinted, and perhaps a dim suggestion of three volumes—but all the rest a deep inscrutable mystery. It was behind a door he whispered it. He gave me to understand that between ourselves it would throw a light on certain autobiographies—that somebody hadn't represented something quite correctly somewhere—that *he* knew all about that, bless you (God knows what) before *she* (God knows who) was trusted with it. And so with one nudge of his elbow and three nods, he dismissed the subject and fell upon another no less weighty and secret.

I really did love him. He seems to have carried away with him half the pleasant good-humoured little eccentricities of the world—of *my* world at least, as Charles Lamb says.

Faithfully yours,
CHARLES DICKENS.

* See *The Dickensian*, 1932, pp. 176-7.

# THE DICKENS DIETARY

By T. W. HILL

## II—DOMESTIC MEALS AND LITTLE FEASTS

I.

IN the previous article, breakfast as a set meal was considered: for the present essay we can consider the numerous "little" and "homely" (used in its best sense) type of refection. Dickens positively revelled in domesticity and is never happier than when apparently "throwing off" an incidental reference to home life, but the "throwing off" is only apparent, for each such seeming aside is really an essential part of the story he is telling and forms part of the character studies with which his books are replete. Could anything be more characteristic of the bachelor habits of a young man in Chambers than Pip's first dinner with Herbert Pocket and the useful hints so tactfully administered to the young lad fresh from the country?

> It was a nice little dinner—seemed to me then a very Lord Mayor's Feast—and it acquired additional relish from being eaten under those independent circumstances, with no old people by, and with London all around us. This again was heightened by a certain Gipsy character that set the banquet off: for, while the table was entirely furnished forth from the coffee-house, the circumjacent region of sitting-room was of a comparatively pastureless and shifty character; imposing on the waiter the wandering habits of putting the covers on the floor (where he fell over them), the melted butter in the arm-chair, the bread on the book-shelves, the cheese in the coal scuttle, and the boiled fowl into my bed in the next room—where I found much of its parsley and butter in a state of congelation when I retired for the night. All this made the feast delightful and when the waiter was not there to watch me my pleasure was without alloy. . . . "Let me mention that in London it is not the custom to put the knife in the mouth—for fear of accidents—and that while the fork is reserved for that use it is not put further in than is necessary. It is scarcely worth mentioning, only it's as well to do as other people do. Also, the spoon is not generally used over-hand, but under. This has two advantages. You get at your mouth better (which after all is the object) and you save a good deal of the attitude of opening oysters, on the part of the right elbow."

The official legal world does not take much time over its luncheon—witness the short adjournments of the courts at midday—and the following examples are cogent. Mr. Jaggers lunched standing, from a sandwich-box and a pocket flask of sherry (he seemed to bully his sandwich as he ate it); while Solomon Pell, a solicitor with not so aristocratic a practice, regaled himself, business being rather slack, with a cold collation of an Abernethy biscuit and a saveloy, cramming them, when he was interrupted, in his pocket among various professional documents. One may dare to hope—perhaps in vain—that the saveloy was not very naked.

When Pumblechook entertained Pip soon after he had started his

London career, the meal was supposed to be quite a little intimate affair, but Pumblechook tried to magnify it into a sort of State Banquet with rather ludicrous results :

> "My dear young friend, you must be hungry, you must be exhausted. Be seated. Here is a chicken had round from the Boar, here is a tongue had round from the Boar, here's one or two little things had round from the Boar, that I hope you may not despise. But do I see afore me him as I ever sported with in his times of happy infancy ? And may I—*may* I—— ?"
>
> This "may I" meant might he shake hands. I consented and he was fervent and then sat down again.
>
> "Here is wine. Let us drink Thanks to Fortune and may she ever pick out her favourites with equal judgment. And yet I cannot see afore me One and likewise drink to One—without again expressing—May I—*may* I—— ?"
>
> I said he might and he shook hands with me again and emptied his glass and turned it upside down. I did the same ; and if I had turned myself upside down before drinking, the wine could not have gone more direct to my head. . . .
>
> At about this time, I began to observe that he was getting flushed in the face ; as to myself I felt all face, steeped in wine and smarting.

The end of such a luncheon is easily foreseen, for Pip's narrative concludes : "Finally I went out into the air with a dim perception that there was something unwonted in the conduct of the sunshine, and found that I had slumberously got to the turnpike without having taken any account of the road."

All homely meals need not necessarily take place within four walls, and no meal is more familiar to Dickens lovers than Trotty Veck's dinner outside St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street. It was not a picnic, but was brought in a basket by his daughter on a day when the temperature was on the frosty side of cool. The description has all the elements of a cosy fireside meal : 1st, pleasurable anticipation, when Trotty tried to guess from the smell what the dish might be (it proved to be "a description of animal food commonly known to the labouring population of this country by the name of tripe") ; 2nd, dainty service—on a pocket-handkerchief instead of a cloth, spread on the Church steps as the weather was dry ; 3rd, proper liquid accompaniment in the shape of half-a-pint of fresh drawn beer in a bottle ; 4th, gustatory gratification, as Trotty "cut and ate, cut and drank, and cut and chewed, and dodged about from tripe to hot potato and from hot potato back again to tripe, with an unctuous and unflagging relish." It is possible for the reader personally to share Trotty's enjoyment.

Trotty's simple heart, the hospitality of his poor home, and his genuine sympathies are further developed in the tea with which he entertained Will Fern and his daughter Lilian. Hiding the emptiness of the larder, he made a paltry excuse to go out and purchase, from his slender means, tea and a rasher of bacon. "It is a curious circumstance but well-known to my friends that I never care, myself, for rashers nor for tea. I like to see other people enjoy 'em—to me, as food, they're disagreeable" . . . But he sniffed the tea in the pot and

the hissing bacon—ah !—as if he liked it. Of course every reader loves Trotty—who could help it ?

II.

Most people know that Dickens himself thought a mutton chop one of the most delectable of meats, and his own idea of a satisfactory meal was a " red-hot chop and a glass of good wine." As might be expected therefore Dickens provides some of his puppets with chops. Did not Mr. Pickwick lay special stress on the desirability of " Chops and Tomata sauce " being ready against his return home ? Does not one recall the worn-out Mr. Twemlow retiring to his little room in Duke Street, St. James's, to take " a plate of mutton broth with a chop in it " in a weary sort of way ? And was not a luxury supper for Tom Pinch provided by chops that were the more acceptable as he had refused John Westlock's invitation to dinner, on purpose not to disappoint Ruth ? Was not Mrs. Pipchin, while her small charges were nourished on food " chiefly of the farinaceous and vegetable kind," addicted to " mutton chops which were brought in hot and hot between two plates and smelt very nice " ? Poor Mrs. Pipchin ; how one grieves for her when the Dombey establishment collapses ! She is reduced to complaining that on the departure of all the servants she has to cook her chop (pork this time) herself, and fears that work of that kind will undermine her constitution !

The staple diet of the inmates of Peggotty's hut was naturally fish. The delightful house so reeked of it that it imparted a scent to little David's handkerchief as if it had wrapped up a lobster. " We dined in a sumptuous manner off boiled dabs, melted butter and potatoes, with a chop for me " as company may be assumed. David was then only eight years of age but evidently very observant, for he describes with some particularity the luncheon or midday dinner, provided for him at the inn at Yarmouth on his way to school, consisting of five chops (of which the waiter ate three) with vegetables, followed by a batter pudding (of which the waiter secured more than half). This substantial repast was accompanied by half a pint of ale (which the waiter took off quick). One pauses here to note that the waiter averred that he was not treated well at the inn and had to " eat broken wittles and sleep on the coals." It cannot be matter for surprise—if he was strictly truthful—that he was glad of David's chops, pudding and ale.

Meals at such a ramshackle institution as the Jellybys' home cannot with real veracity be described as " homely " or as " little feasts " but they deserve mention. It was not uncommon for the dinner (" we dine at all hours ") to be postponed or even abandoned altogether. On one occasion dinner that ought to have been served at five o'clock did not take place owing to Mrs. Jellyby's obsession with Borrioboola Gha, till seven o'clock. " We had a fine cod-fish, a piece of roast beef, a dish of cutlets and a pudding ; an excellent dinner if it had had any cooking to speak of, but it was almost raw." It was long, in consequence of " such accidents as the dish of potatoes being mislaid

in the coal-scuttle and the handle of the corkscrew coming off and striking the young woman on the chin." Mr. Jellyby came in after the fish course and dropped into a vacant chair. The dinner cloth was not cleared away but left till the next morning ready for breakfast, to which meal everybody came and seized what they could get. There was often no milk if the cat were first. When Mr. Jellyby came in he usually groaned and went down to the kitchen and then got something to eat if the servant would give him anything. Surely this description pictures homely if not very comforting feeding arrangements.

Truly homely however were the dinners at the Bagnets'. The mother's favourite occupation was apparently washing greens, probably a habit contracted during her campaigning days, for she was a soldier's wife, in preparation for the next meal, which was usually boiled beef and greens, although the menu is sometimes varied to boiled pork and greens, so we conclude that the housewife's talents were seen at their best with boiled or stewed food. When dinner was served Mrs. Bagnet " sits with every dish before her, allotting to every portion of pork its own portion of pot-liquor, greens, and potatoes, and even mustard, and serves it out complete. Having likewise served out the beer from a can and thus supplied the mess with all things necessary Mrs. Bagnet proceeds to satisfy her own hunger, which is in a healthy state." There seems reason to believe that the pork was pickled rather than fresh, for we read that when Mrs. Bagnet visited George while he was in prison she took him refreshment in the form of " a piece of cold pickled pork, a little tea and sugar and a brown loaf."

Comfort, coupled with plenty, characterized the Casby ménage, and the dinner to which Arthur Clennam sat down was marked by much domesticity. It was neatly served and well cooked, for " everything about the Patriarchal household promoted quiet digestion," and the dinner began with " some soup, some fried soles, a butter-boat of shrimp sauce, and a dish of potatoes " ; there was " mutton, a steak, and an apple-pie, and the meal went on like a disenchanted feast." The last of the Patriarchs had always been " a mighty eater and he disposed of an immense quantity of solid food with the benignity of a good soul feeding some one else." As he was well advanced in years it is no surprise to learn that after such a hearty meal the Patriarch shewed signs of a desire to go to sleep. The diners, besides those mentioned, were Mr. Pancks, who talked rents all the time, Mr. F's Aunt, whose unexpected sallies enlivened the conversation, and her daughter-in-law Flora who was " very fond of porter, combined a great deal of sherry with sentiment," and " whose present appetite for eating and drinking did not prevent her from having a past appetite for romantic love."

III.

Although the next example cannot be strictly described as a real meal, seeing that it existed only in the imaginative reminiscences—rambling at all times—of Mrs. Nickleby, it will bear repetition.

"I don't know how it is, but a fine, warm, summer day like this, with the birds singing in every direction, always puts me in mind of roast pig, with sage and onion sauce, and made gravy. . . . Roast pig—let me see. On the day five weeks after you were christened we had a roast—no, that couldn't have been a pig either, because I recollect there were a pair of them to carve, and your poor papa and I could never have thought of sitting down to two pigs—they must have been partridges. Roast pig! I hardly think we ever could have had one, now I come to remember, for your papa could never bear the sight of them in the shops, and used to say that they always put him in mind of very little babies, only the pigs had much fairer complexions; and he had a horror of little babies, too, because he couldn't very well afford any increase to his family and had a natural dislike to the subject. It's very odd now, what can have put that in my head? I recollect dining once at Mrs. Bevans's, in that broad street round the corner by the coach-maker's, where the tipsy man fell through the cellar-flap of an empty house, nearly a week before the quarter-day, and wasn't found till the new tenant went in—and we had roast pig there. It must be that, I think, that reminds me of it, especially as there was a little bird in the room that would keep on singing all the time of dinner—at least, not a little bird, for it was a parrot, and he didn't sing exactly, for he talked and swore dreadfully; but I think it must be that."

Among little feasts, using that term as denoting enjoyment rather than quantity, we must note Kit Nubbles's delayed arrival home, and his use of a clasp-knife as an aid to the avid consumption of a great piece of bread and meat which had been ready for him hours before; or on another day when he had to eat his meal alone, a large slice of bread and meat and a mug of beer, which he carried into a corner out of the way of his mother's ironing, where he applied himself to the disposing of them with great voracity. Kit apparently possessed all the love for food that the Patriarch had, without the means of gratifying it.

Compare with Mrs. Nubbles's provision and thought for a healthy boy's appetite the scene between Sally Brass and her little half-starved servant the "Marchioness." This was a "little" feast indeed, "A dreary waste of cold potatoes looking as eatable as Stonehenge," two square inches of cold mutton, and "don't you ever go and say that you hadn't meat here." "You've been helped once to meat, you have had as much as you can eat, you're asked if you want any more and you answer No [which was true, as the poor little girl did not dare to say Yes]. Then don't you ever go and say you were allowanced; mind that."

Comparable with the Marchioness's treatment by Sally Brass was Judy Smallweed's way of feeding Charlotte (Charley) Neckitt. The family's tea was prepared for by the chaste and charming Judy on strictly economical lines, inspired, no doubt, by the stingy ways of Grandfather Smallweed, who kept a tyrannical eye on the household expenditure. They had bread scraped with butter with every precaution against waste, and after that was finished Charley was called

into the room to have her tea. She had a basin of tea apparently made by pouring water to an unlimited extent on the wet leaves in the pot, and a Druidical ruin of bread and butter—all the remains of the family meal. " Don't stare about you all the afternoon, but take your victuals and get back to your work." Charley swallows a great gulp of tea and so disperses the Druidical ruins that she is charged not to gormandize. She is then told to answer a knock at the door and warned not to chew when she opens it, and Judy takes the opportunity to jumble the remains of the bread and butter together, launching two or three dirty teacups into the ebb-tide of the basin as a sign that the eating and drinking is terminated.

Even the crossing-sweeper Jo, with all his privations, is better off than these two poor little drudges, for he was, on occasion, loaded by Mr. Snagsby with broken meats from the well-provided table at which Mr. Chadband had gorged, and finding a baking stony corner by Blackfriars Bridge he sat munching and gnawing in a very Trotty Veck-like manner till he, too, is " moved on."

Another literally little feast was Prince Turveydrop's. His deportmental parent was going to what he called his little meal at the French House in the Opera Colonnade, but he told his son that he would " find the cold mutton on the table " from which he could get " a morsel of dinner," as he had to be quick in order to keep an early appointment. Even after Prince's marriage his wife put up for him a few sandwiches, presumably for him to consume on his road between appointments. We read without surprise that Prince's health was not strong and that he is described as a little blue-eyed fair man of youthful appearance with a little fiddle and a little bow ; and that he had little dancing shoes and a little innocent feminine manner.

When Nicholas Nickleby was on his way to Portsmouth, he partook of a homely supper with Mr. Crummles. On arrival at the inn Nicholas had enquired if there was cold meat, but there was no cold meat ; then poached eggs, but there were no poached eggs ; then mutton chops, but there was not a mutton chop within three miles, though there had been more last week than they knew what to do with, and there would be an extraordinary supply the day after tomorrow. So Nicholas agreed to sup with Mr. Crummles on hot beef-steak pudding and potatoes at nine o'clock, and after a comforting meal he accepted Mr. Crummles's invitation to share a bowl of punch over which he was offered a situation in the theatrical troupe. Next day he was glad to take further of Mr. Crummles's hospitality at another comfortable dinner—everything about the Crummles home was hospitable, hearty and comfortable—of shoulder of mutton and onion sauce.

Clandestine meals, always attractive in prospect and sometimes in retrospect, can be enjoyable as well as romantic, and one recalls those in the dormitory at Salem House. Steerforth induced (if a sort of compulsion can be called inducement) little David Copperfield to spend all his term's pocket money—seven shillings—on a bottle of currant wine, almond cakes, biscuits and fruit. Steerforth pronounced it a " royal spread " and it was consumed in the dormitory by moonlight,

the talk being maintained in whispers: a really thrilling experience for young David. Another dormitory feast was provided by the result of a visit to the school of Mr. Peggotty and Ham, who left behind them "two prodigious lobsters, an enormous crab and a large canvas bag of shrimps" as a little relish with the wittles." But on this occasion the developments of such a feast last thing at night were rather unhappy as Traddles, who was usually in hot water for something or other, was taken ill in the night—quite prostrate—in consequence of crab, was drugged with black draughts and blue pills "to an extent enough to undermine a horse's constitution," and received, for refusing to confess, a caning and six chapters of Greek Testament.

Young Wackford Squeers, in accordance with his practice of feeding at other people's expense than his father's, managed to make a substantial repast when his father called on John Browdie at tea-time at the Saracen's Head. Tea was a meal of Yorkshire proportions, and there was plenty to eat, so, while the grown-ups' backs were turned —a lively discussion was going on—young Wackford sidled up to the table, "drew his fingers round the inside of the plates and then sucking them with infinite relish, picking the bread and dragging the pieces over the surface of the butter, pocketed lumps of sugar, and finally, seeing he was still unnoticed helped himself to a moderately good cold collation of pie."

IV.

Could the food purchased on his way to the wine cellars of Murdstone and Grinby by David Copperfield with the money he ought to have saved for his dinner be described as a homely meal or a little feast? It must be remembered that he was only ten years of age, and it was a long walk after breakfast from Windsor Terrace to Hungerford Bridge. One is scarcely astonished that he could not resist the stale pastry at half-price. Having to go without his dinner, he bought a roll or a slice of pudding, one kind of which was rather a special pudding and made with currants—a stout pale pudding, heavy and flabby, with great flat raisins in it. Sometimes he dined on a saveloy and a penny loaf, or a fourpenny plate of red beef from a cook's shop; or a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer from a miserable old public house. Once he took his own bread brought from home into a famous *à-la-mode* beef-house and ordered a small plate of that delicacy to eat with it. "I gave the waiter a halfpenny and I wish he hadn't taken it." This variety of comestibles looks nearly as varied as the menu at a restaurant and shows how lively was the little boy's imagination.

Still considering little boys, we can turn for a moment to contemplate Oliver Twist's meals; they can hardly be described as homely, but they were decidedly little and Lilliputian, not to say microscopical. We know how badly he was fed at the workhouse, and when he was apprenticed to Sowerberry, the undertaker, his dinner was the cold bits that were put by for Trip the dog, so a plateful of coarse broken victuals was his portion, and the poor little chap tore the bits asunder

with " horrible avidity " and " all the voracity of famine." Afterwards he fared a little better, as he and his fellow-apprentice Noah had a " banquet upon a small joint of mutton—a pound-and-a-half of the worst end of the neck."

The food given by Mrs. Jarley to Nell and her Grandfather at the back of the caravan was wholesome and may rightly be included among the little feasts, for although it was served in the open air it was to the wayworn travellers a positive banquet and seemed to partake of the homeliness and comfort of Mrs. Jarley's peripatetic home. The wayfarers were invited up the steps of the caravan, " but the drum proving an inconvenient table for two, they descended again and sat upon the grass and Mrs. Jarley handed down to them the tea-tray, the bread and butter, the knuckle of ham, and, in short, everything of which she had partaken herself except the bottle." " Now," said she, " hand up the teapot for a little more hot water and a pinch of fresh tea, and then both of you eat and drink as much as you can and don't spare anything : that's all I ask of you."

Little Dorrit's Party must be included in this article, although it was neither a little feast nor a homely meal. It was celebrated, on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, on the steps of the Marshalsea prison, on a cold night, the only dance she and Maggy saw was the dance of the flying clouds, and their only feast was the wine and cake and fruit with which Arthur Clennam had loaded Maggy's basket.

On two occasions did Rogue Riderhood entertain Bradley Headstone, and on each occasion it was, in accordance with his crooked ways, bait for his trap to catch his victim. The first was after Headstone's wicked assault on Wrayburn, after which he sought shelter in Riderhood's Lock-house. The formality of spreading a table-cloth not being observed, the service merely consisted in the handing down of a capacious baking-dish with three-fourths of an immense meat-pie in it, and the production of two pocket-knives, an earthenware mug and a large brown bottle of beer. In lieu of plates Riderhood cut two triangular pieces from the thick crust of the pie and laid them inside uppermost upon the table ; upon these platters he placed two goodly portions of the contents of the pie, this imparting the unusual interest to the entertainment that each partaker scooped out the inside of his plate and consumed it with his other fare, besides having the sport of pursuing the clots of congealed gravy over the plain of the table and taking them into his mouth at last from the blade of his knife. As one may imagine Riderhood was closely watching his guest throughout the meal, and so he was on the second occasion, which was after Headstone had slept in Riderhood's Lock-house the night before they both went to their death in the lock, but on this second visit the guest had no stomach for food—his mind was too full of his own fell purposes —and he started on his final walk closely followed by Riderhood, who had seized a piece of bread from the table.

We can go abroad for one example of a little feast and a homely meal combined, not certainly enjoyed in domestic surroundings, for the scene is laid in a prison at Marseilles. " This big loaf is for Signor

John Baptist; this sausage is for Monsieur Rigaud; this veal in savoury jelly is for Monsieur Rigaud; these three white little loaves are for Monsieur Rigaud; again, this cheese; again, this wine; again, this tobacco; all for Monsieur Rigaud." John Baptist gave variety to his meagre meal, the lump of coarse bread, by cutting it in different shapes: so—like a melon; so—like an omelette; so—like a fried fish; so—like a Lyons sausage; and then eating each piece as though it were the particular delicacy it represented, imagination (it must have been a vivid one) doing the rest. The more fortunate Rigaud gave John Baptist the small remains of the bottle of wine and a hand-rolled cigarette followed by a second, and so completed what one may hope was a satisfying repast.

It will have been noticed all through the examples given above how detailed are the particulars of all these scrap meals, each so cunningly suited to the people for whom they are provided, each so forcibly bringing out the personalities of the characters providing the food, and each contributing to the progress of the story. This was Dickens's method of story-telling, and besides avoiding pages of character-analysis, it enables the reader to envisage the individual people in the novels in a much more graphic way. The Dickens portrait gallery is full of live people and not of lay figures which it might be difficult to endow with any symptoms of life.

# DICKROSTICS

## A New Puzzle

BY WALTER THOMAS

The initials of the characters, places, etc. (here given in the order in which Dickens wrote of them), when properly arranged will give a well-known quotation from the works.

No. 5. Ten words (3, 3, 7, 6, 2, 3, 5, 2, 3, 5 letters). A sentiment of Swiveller which finds an echo in us all.

1. The Miss associated with the Eagle (5).
2. The returned convict (7).
3. Chelsea waterworks was nothing to him (7).
4. Let lodgings to carvers and cutters (7).
5. Where Mr. Pickwick announced the winding-up of the Club (8).
6. He defied the Bench, but in vain (6).
7. There were five sisters here (4).
8. A Peter Pan actress (6).
9. A nil tin man (anag.) (9).
10. A submarine union (11).
11. Search Simon for a maid (11).
12. A precocious host at supper after Astleys (7).
13. Urged to hide from justice (5).
14. His father always called him Ned (6).
15. A big fellow; change a letter and he would be huge (4).
16. Bulldogs in this instance; Grand Junction, etc., in another (6).
17. Never quite in sight, but always round the corner (5).
18. A dilatory female in spite of her name (7).
19. Always referred to as Mr., B. A. (6).
20. Dieth (anag.) (5).
21. Willin' (6).
22. Eton drums this man (9).
23. From St. Luke's Workhouse (7).
24. Better known as Martha (6).
25. An oyster of the old school (11).
26. Nobody, but important in the story (4).
27. Shovel (anag.) (6).
28. The Christian name of the keeper of a wine-shop (6).
29. O Now, Veneer is here (10).
30. He didn't like brandy flavoured with tar (11).
31. His boy said "Don't know yah" (5).
32. Mrs. Jirriper's testator (5).
33. A handy piece of furniture on casters (7).
34. Neither a bird, nor an architect, nor a war-worker (4).
35. The cherub (8).
36. She had so many (grown-up) children she didn't know what to do (6).
37. An ass, an ape, and a mixture of both (6).
38. A sparkling light weight (10).
39. It is not usual to gather the first part during the second part; but preach about it (12).

*(Solutions will appear in the next number.)*

# THE RECEPTION OF THE FIRST READINGS

(Extracted from Dickens's Own Letters)

Exeter was tremendous. You never saw such a reception and we might have stayed there a week. I have never seen a finer or more subtly apprehensive audience than at Exeter. Nor did I ever know the minutest touches in Little Dombey go better in London than at Plymouth. As to the Boots, the people gave themselves up altogether (Generals, Mayors and Shillings, equally) to a perfect transport of enjoyment of him and the two children.

* * * * *

We have had a tremendous night [Liverpool]. The largest house I have ever had since I first began ; 2300 people, over £200 in money. . . . On each of the two previous nights we had 100 guineas.

* * * * *

For Little Dombey this morning [Dublin], we have an immense stall let—already more than two hundred—and people are now fighting in the agent's shop to take more . . . (Later) Everybody was at Little Dombey to-day, and although I had some difficulty to work them up in consequence of the excessive crowding of the place, and the difficulty of shaking the people into their seats, the effect was unmistakable and profound. The crying was universal, and they were extraordinarily affected.

* * * * *

After all deductions, and after paying Arthur's share, I made here [Dublin] £210, and at Belfast (two days) £130. With a good return at Cork, and nothing very great at Limerick, from which we don't expect much (except pretty women, for which it is famous), I shall have made a handsome Thousand Pounds, since I left Gads Hill on our country Tour ! That is no doubt, immense ; our expenses being necessarily large, and the travelling party being always five.

* * * * *

I think them [Belfast] a better audience on the whole, than Dublin ; and the personal affection there was something overwhelming. Boots and Gamp was just one roar with me and them, for they made me laugh so that sometimes I *could not* compose my face to go on.

* * * * *

Fancy, at Cork (by no means a large place) more than 1000 stalls being engaged for the three readings. I made last week clear profit £340 . . . A great many people were turned away too on the last night.

* * * * *

At Glasgow, where I read three evenings and one morning, we took the prodigiously large sum of six hundred pounds !

* * * * *

Little Leamington came out in the most amazing manner yesterday. We took £130; and turned away hundreds upon hundreds of people. They are represented as the dullest and worst of audiences. I found them very good indeed, even in the morning.

* * * * *

In that large room at Clifton the people were perfectly taken off their legs by *The Chimes*—started—looked at each other—started again—looked at me—and then burst into a storm of applause.

* * * * *

A wonderful audience last night at Wolverhampton. If such a thing can be, they were even quicker and more intelligent than the audience I had in Edinburgh. I never saw such people. And the local agent would take no money, and charge no expenses of his own.

# "MR. CHARLES DICKENS WILL READ"

By WALTER DEXTER

III.

ACCORDING to Charles Kent, after the Reading in London on February 8th, 1859, "upwards of two years and a half elapsed without any more of the Readings being undertaken, either in the provinces or in the metropolis."

We have already pointed out that Kent omitted mention of the second provincial tour in October, 1859, although Dickens placed at his disposal all books and papers relating to the Readings in order that a full and authoritative account should be written. Kent also states that it was not until the late summer of 1861 that further London readings were projected. This is not correct. Forster mentions six London readings in March and April, 1861, and in looking over some advertisement cuttings recently, I came across the following, dated 1859:

> Mr. Charles Dickens will read, at St. Martin's-hall, on Monday, Jan. 2, at 8 o'clock, for the last time, his CHRISTMAS CAROL and TRIAL from PICKWICK. Stalls 4s.; children 2s. 6d.; centre area and balconies 2s.; back seats 1s. Tickets to be had at Messrs. Chapman and Hall's, publishers, 193 Piccadilly; and of Mr. Headland, at St. Martin's-hall, Long-acre.

My usual places of research through the columns of "The Times" being closed owing to enemy action, I was fortunate enough to enlist the good offices of my friend Mr. Louis B. Frewer, and he kindly searched the files of "The Times" at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and found the above advertisement in that paper during the last week of December, 1859. The Readings given at that time were as follows:

THE FINAL READINGS AT THE ST. MARTIN'S HALL

| *Date.* | *Reading.* |
|---|---|
| 1859. | |
| Saturday, December 24th. Afternoon. | *A Christmas Carol, Trial.* |
| Monday, December 26th. | *A Christmas Carol.* |
| 1860. | |
| Monday, January 2nd. | *A Christmas Carol, Trial.* |

The Reading of January 2nd, 1860, was advertised as "for the last time," and actually it was the last appearance of Dickens at the St. Martin's Hall; it was burnt down the following August.

So far as we can ascertain there were no further Readings during 1860. In March, 1861, they were resumed at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. Forster gives details of them, although Kent omits all mention.

THE FIRST READINGS AT THE ST. JAMES'S HALL

| *Date.* | *Reading.* |
|---|---|
| 1861. | |
| Thursday, March 14th. | *A Christmas Carol*; *Boots at the Holly Tree Inn.* |
| Friday, March 22nd. | *Little Dombey*; *Trial.* |
| Thursday, March 28th. | *A Christmas Carol*; *Trial.* |
| Thursday, April 4th. | *Little Dombey*; *Trial.* |
| Thursday, April 11th. | *A Christmas Carol*; *Mrs. Gamp.* |
| Thursday, April 18th. | *Little Dombey*; *Trial.* |

Arthur Smith was still Dickens's business manager, and made all the arrangements for the tour to start in October, 1861, but he died in September.* His assistant, Thomas Headland, then undertook the management of what Forster describes as "the Second Series of Readings." This lasted until June, 1862. The tour started at the end of October, 1861, and, with only a short break at Christmas, continued until the end of June, 1862. A list of the towns visited is printed below. To this has been added the Readings in London from March to June, 1862.

During the tour the Dotheboys Hall incidents from *Nicholas Nickleby* were added to the Readings.

THE SECOND SERIES OF READINGS.

| *Date.* | | | *Town.* | *Place.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1861. | | | |
| Monday | October | 28 | Norwich. | St. Andrew's Hall. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 29 | Norwich. | St. Andrew's Hall. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 30 | Bury St. Edmunds. | Athenaeum Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 31 | Ipswich. | Corn Exchange. |
| Friday | November | 1 | Colchester. | Theatre. |
| Monday | ,, | 4 | Canterbury. | Theatre Royal. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 5 | Dover. | Apollonian Hall. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 6 | Hastings. | Music Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 7 | Brighton. | Town Hall. |
| Friday | ,, | 8 | Brighton. | Town Hall. |
| Saturday (Aft.) | ,, | 9 | Brighton. | Pavilion. |
| Thursday | ,, | 21 | Newcastle-on-Tyne. | Music Hall. |
| Friday | ,, | 22 | Newcastle-on-Tyne. | Music Hall. |
| Saturday | ,, | 23 | Newcastle-on-Tyne. | Music Hall. |
| Monday | ,, | 25 | Berwick. | King's Arms Assembly Rooms. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 27 | Edinburgh. | Queen Street Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 28 | Edinburgh. | Queen Street Hall. |
| Saturday (twice) | ,, | 30 | Edinburgh. | Queen Street Hall. |
| Monday | December | 2 | Edinburgh. | Queen Street Hall. |
| Monday | ,, | 9 | Carlisle. | Athenaeum Hall. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 10 | Carlisle. | Athenaeum Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 12 | Lancaster. | Music Hall. |

* See note next page.

THE SECOND SERIES OF READINGS—*continued.*

| *Date.* | | | *Town.* | *Place.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1861. | | | |
| Friday | December | 13 | Preston. | Corn Exchange. |
| Saturday | ,, | 14 | Manchester. | Free Trade Hall. |
| Monday | ,, | 30 | Birmingham. | Music Hall. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 31 | Birmingham. | Music Hall. |
| | 1862. | | | |
| Wednesday | January | 1 | Leamington. | Music Hall. |
| Friday | ,, | 3 | Cheltenham. | Assembly Rooms. |
| Saturday (aft.) | ,, | 4 | Cheltenham. | Assembly Rooms. |
| Monday | ,, | 6 | Plymouth. | St. George's Hall, Stonehouse. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 7 | Plymouth. | ditto. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 8 | Torquay. | Bath Saloons. |
| Thursday | ,, | 9 | Torquay. | Bath Saloons. |
| Saturday | ,, | 25 | Manchester. | Free Trade Hall. |
| Monday | ,, | 27 | Liverpool. | St. George's Hall. |
| Tuesday | ,, | 28 | Liverpool. | St. George's Hall. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 29 | Liverpool. | St. George's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 30 | Chester. | Music Hall. |
| Thursday | March | 13 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 20 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 27 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | April | 3 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 10 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 24 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Wednesday | May | 7 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Saturday | ,, | 17 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Wednesday | ,, | 21 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Friday | June | 6 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Thursday | ,, | 19 | London. | St. James's Hall. |
| Friday | ,, | 27 | London. | St. James's Hall. |

## TWO CORRECTIONS

On page 136 of the last number we stated that Arthur Smith, Dickens's manager for the Readings, died before the autumn tour of 1859 took place. This was not correct. Arthur Smith died in September, 1861, just before the commencement of the second series of Readings, as stated on page 202 in this issue.

We are indebted to Mr. Herbert Walker, of Ipswich, for the information that the reading there on October 10th, 1859, was given in the Corn Exchange, and not in the Mechanics' Institute as stated on page 139.

## DICKROSTICS SOLUTIONS

(See Page 170)

No. 3.—"When found make a note of." 1, Arabella; 2, Harris; 3, Fagin; 4, Nell; 5, Trent; 6, Native; 7, Omer; 8, Old Soldier; 9, Kenge; 10, Flite; 11, Egbert; 12, Oswald; 13, Nandy; 14, Merdle; 15, Evermonde; 16, Uncle; 17, Wemmick; 18, Avender; 19, Eugene; 20, Datchery.

No. 4.—"Thinking of the old 'un." 1, Ode; 2, Overton; 3, Lowten; 4, Nimetta; 5, Noggs; 6, Kenwigs; 7, Isaac; 8, Dennis; 9, Fezziwig; 10, Tapley; 11, Eden; 12, Nipper; 13, Toots; 14, Gummidge; 15, 'umble; 16, Hard; 17, Hexam; 18, Inspector.

# THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE

THE thirty-fifth Conference of the Dickens Fellowship was held at the Comedy Restaurant, Haymarket, London, on June 7th, and allowing for the difficulties of the times was remarkably well attended. No less than nine branches were represented, and there was a large attendance of London members.

The Chairman of the Council, Mr. Leo Mason (Blackburn) opened the proceedings with a spirited address which appears on another page.

Greetings were read from the retiring President, Mr. Compton Mackenzie, who at the request of the Emergency Committee offered himself for re-election for a further period of two years. On this motion being submitted it was carried unanimously with enthusiastic acclamation.

The Officers constituting the Emergency Committee (Mrs. Major, Messrs. Dexter, Hill and Staples) were re-elected. It was decided that the book for the Season 1942-43 should be *Dombey and Son*, it being noted that the book for the coming Season, as decided at the last Conference, is *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

In presenting the accounts, the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. T. W. Hill, reported that the books of the Fellowship and of the House had suffered from enemy action while in the possession of the Auditors, and it had therefore not been possible to prepare audited accounts in time for the Conference. The books, however, had been recovered, and although much damaged, could be read. The accounts Mr. Hill submitted, "subject to audit," showed that the Finances of the Fellowship were in as satisfactory a state as could reasonably be expected in the circumstances. The Hon. Secretary, Mr. Staples, and Mr. Walter Dexter also spoke on the position of both the Fellowship and the Dickens House, the latter stressing aid for the "Friends of the Dickens House," an increase in the number of "Friends" being urgent and necessary. The need was fully appreciated by those present who promptly contributed £8 to the funds. The accounts were then passed "subject to audit," and the Hon. Auditors, Messrs. Whinney Smith and Whinney, were re-elected with a special vote of thanks to them for their invaluable services for more than a quarter of a century.

Following the business meeting, over eighty delegates and friends met at Lunch under the presidency of Mr. Leo Mason. The Immortal Memory was proposed by Mr. T. W. Hill in a notable address printed on page 205 of this number of *The Dickensian*. Following luncheon, Mr. George F. Young escorted a party on a short tour of the more interesting streets in the vicinity.

Thus ended the second Conference of the present war, fully demonstrating the determination of the Dickens Fellowship to serve its purpose to the best of its ability during hostilities, and so to preserve its power to assume its rightful place in the National life when peace is restored.

L. C. S.

THE EDINBURGH BRANCH announces that the Work Party resumes its activities on Saturday, 11th October, at 13 Castle Terrace, at 3 p.m.

# IMMORTAL MEMORY

By T. W. HILL*

I.

WE meet in times of great anxiety—anxiety about ourselves, anxiety about our dear ones, anxiety about our Homeland, and indeed anxiety about our civilization and the culture built upon the foundations laid down by the greatest philosophers and thinkers of the past and present; foundations, in the words of the Book of Common Prayer, of peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, and perfect freedom.

Our magnificent Prime Minister adjures us civilians to "carry on." We must keep our ordinary lives going so far as possible, but we must be prepared to put it on one side temporarily for war work. And that is just what the Dickens Fellowship is doing.

Now what would Charles Dickens have done had he been alive at the present time? I think we can safely say that he would have "carried on." As with ourselves he was not unaware of war when it occurred, and like ourselves he had his own work to do. He was fortunate in never having experienced the horrors of a major war, certainly not of a total war. His lifetime began just after the close of the long Napoleonic war and ended just before the Franco-Prussian war. It was a long period of comparative peace and of industrial development, broken only, so far as England was concerned, by the futile Crimean war and the Indian mutiny. The wars of other nations, such as the American Civil War and those of Germany with Austria and with Denmark, did not greatly affect life in England, and Dickens, essentially a fighting man, put all his energies into the national internal struggle to improve the social conditions of the common people. Of course, allusions to military matters are not absent from his letters and his public life, but you will see where his own particular work lay when I remind you that during the Crimean War he was busy writing *Little Dorrit*, editing *Household Words*, conducting a voluminous correspondence, public speaking on behalf of charitable objects, organizing theatrical performances and acting in them, and giving readings from his works for charity; all this time he was involved in a serious domestic crisis; indeed he must have been overworked and mentally much harried. But—he put one of his sons into the Army and another into the Navy like the true patriot he was.

Yes, Dickens, like everyone of his time, could not be entirely unaware of war. He was too much of a good citizen to be quite unaffected, in spite of his many preoccupations. War as war he detested as we all do. Not that he lacked courage. Remember his self-sacrifice on the occasion of the Staplehurst railway accident. Hanging over a chasm, a fall into which might have been fatal, he climbed out of the window of his railway carriage and in spite of his own bruises and of the shaking and shock he had received, he immediately devoted himself

* Speech delivered at the Conference luncheon in London on 7th June, 1941.

to the rescue and care of those who had suffered. Allusions to war are very scarce in his works. Even in *The Story of Richard Doubledick* he was concerned to write about the saving of a soul rather than the promotion of a soldier. The one object was wrapped up with the other, but the saving of the soul was the important point.

He shared with everyone else the excitement of waiting for news. Listen to his letter from Boulogne to Frank Stone written during the Crimean War:

> " Having some little matters that rather press on my attention to see to in town, I have made up my mind to relinquish the walking project, and come straight home by way of Folkestone on Tuesday. I shall be due in town at midnight, and shall hope to see you next day, with the top of your coat-collar mended. Everything that happens here we suppose to be an announcement of the taking of Sebastopol. When a church clock strikes, we think it is the joy-bell, and fly out of the house in a burst of nationality—to sneak in again. If they practise firing in the camp, we are sure it is the artillery celebrating the fall of the Russians, and we become enthusiastic in a moment. I live in constant readiness to illuminate the whole house. Whatever anybody says I believe ; everybody says, every day, that Sebastopol is in flames. Sometimes the Commander-in-Chief has blown himself up, with seventy-five thousand men. Sometimes he has ' cut ' his way through Lord Raglan, and has fallen back on the advancing body of the Russians, one hundred-and-forty-two thousand strong, whom he is going to ' bring up ' (I don't know where from, or how, or when, or why) for the destruction of the Allies. All these things, in the words of the Catechism, ' I steadfastly believe,' until I become a mere driveller, a moonstruck, babbling, staring, credulous, imbecile, greedy, gaping, wooden-headed, addle-brained, wool-gathering, dreary, vacant, obstinate civilian."

Personal prowess would of course appeal to him, for he was a strenuous fighter in any cause that commanded his sympathies, but he could not and did not mask his satire at the way in which war was managed or rather mismanaged by authority. It seems natural in every war in which Britain is engaged that there should be grumblings about its management, and Dickens, being such an orderly and methodical soul himself, naturally got a little impatient and joined in the game of Government-baiting. In the *Miscellaneous Papers* is a paper dated 1857 called *Stores for the First of April.* It arraigns the mismanagement of military stores and material that failed to reach its destination : it speaks of soldiers in the Crimea perishing by thousands, " abject scarecrows in rags . . . while their knapsacks were in the Black Sea, their squad-bags at Scutari, thousands of pairs of trousers missing, thousands of coatees unused, and tens of thousands of great-coats, blankets and rugs filling the Quartermaster-General's Stores, or the harbour of Balaclava," all due to the " deficiency of transport to the front," and then he mentions 350,000 pounds of vegetables, of which 273,000 pounds were admitted to have been destroyed whilst the " greater part of the remainder was never issued." I think the figures must have been his own.

II.

And how Dickens hated what we call Chatterbuggery. You will not need reminding of the constant warnings we all received during the last war against gossip and rumour, and how it is a recurring nuisance in the present struggle. Hear Dickens on the Chatterbug, to whom he gave the name of Mr. Prowler. Again I am quoting from *Miscellaneous Papers* in an article called *The Best Authority*, a quite sufficiently descriptive title:

"I call upon the Best Authority to stand forth. On more than one occasion I have thought I had him. In that portion of Pall Mall, London, which is bounded on the east by the Senior United Service Club House and on the west by the Carlton Club House—a miasmatic spot, in which I suppose more boredom to be babbled daily than in any two thousand square miles on the surface of the earth—into that dismal region I had sometimes tracked the despot and there lost him. One day upon the steps of the Athenæum, of which eminent institution I have the honour to be a member, I found a fellow-member, Mr. Prowler of the Royal Society of Arts, lying in wait under the portico, to pour a drop of special information into the ear of every man and brother who approached the temple. Mr. Prowler is a grave and secret personage always specially informed, who whispers his way through life. He goes about like a lukewarm draught of air, breathing intelligence into the ears of his fellow-men, and passing on. He had often previously brought me into trouble. . . . On this occasion the subject-matter of his confidence was so much more than usually impossible that I took the liberty to intimate my sense of its irreconcilability with all laws human and divine, and to ask him from whom he had his information? He replied, from the Best Authority; at the same time implying with a profound and portentous movement of his head that that mysterious Being had just gone in. I thought the hour had come—rushed into the hall—and found, nobody there but a weak old gentleman. . . . At the Reform Club I know the Best Authority to pervade that building constantly. . . . No trace of his form however had revealed itself to me. I dashed into the vault [where we hang up our hats and coats] and seized (as I fondly thought) the Best Authority, to cope with him at last in the death-struggle. It was only my cousin Cackles, admitted to be the most amiable ass alive, who inoffensively asked me if I had heard the news? . . . The Best Authority was gone. How gone, whither gone, I am in no condition to say."

Yes, we laugh at these extracts, as Dickens intended we should laugh, because the laughter aroused by his ridicule is probably the best means of annihilating the thing laughed at.

III.

Our place of meeting this year is again London, but that is a war measure. We all know how Dickens loved London and how intimately he knew it, from its greatest arteries to its smallest veins—from its most important thoroughfares to its tiniest alleys. At last year's Conference Mr. George Orwell, in this room, spoke of the possibility of enemy action at our doors, and Mr. Churchill has told the world

that we shall fight—we will fight—the enemy on our coasts, in the countryside, in our streets if necessary. And since that date some of this threat has reached us through the love of wanton destruction for destruction's sake in the sadistic paranoic megalomaniac whose shadow for the present darkens the whole of Europe. Some of my hearers have felt the stroke of misfortune, and all of us have felt loss of many of our homes and of our treasured public and historical buildings.

But, nevertheless, and notwithstanding the destruction and devastation that surround us, we must still look forward; not backward, except as a constant reminder. Don't forget that Lot's wife looked back, and beware her fate. Our motto is "Resurgam." You all know the story of Sir Christopher Wren when he rebuilt St. Paul's after the Great Fire of 1666, finding the tomb-stone with that inscription Resurgam—I shall rise again. The cathedral he designed for us is not a bit like the cathedral that was burnt. Wren's building is a masterpiece of classical renaissance; the former building was also a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. When it was burnt down, its tombs, its brasses, its chapels, its stalls, its Duke Humfrey's Walk, all disappeared. Only their memory remains; but—it—does—remain. Have we not Hollar's engravings of the old St. Paul's in which we can admire the vanished beauties of that fine structure?

Now can I, may I, apply an analogy? A great deal of Dickens's London has disappeared through enemy action, and when London is rebuilt we may be certain that there will be a different city, perhaps laid out on different lines, but certainly very different in appearance from the city we have learned to love. But we have invaluable pictures and photographs of the nooks and corners of the London that Dickens knew. (In an aside I may say that we owe a great number of these to the Dickens Fellowship, and especially to the late T. W. Tyrell, whose marvellous collection of photographic negatives is among our treasures—we hope safely housed—at the Dickens House.) How much we ought to value those pictures of the homes and haunts of Dickens and how fortunate we are to possess them.

In one of Dickens's articles he asks why, when a building tumbles in a heap of ruins, it is always referred to as if it were a triumph of construction and all buildings that don't tumble down are failures? If a boiler bursts why was it the very best of boilers? Dickens calls this sort of thing a conventionality, but surely it is also a parable. Our sense of loss is apt to cast a halo of glory on that which is gone, often to the detriment of that which replaces it. Surely the new St. Paul's of Wren is as beautiful, nay, is more beautiful, than the old St. Paul's, and it is the concern of the coming generation to see that the new London to be built is more beautiful than that so badly knocked about.

Let us face facts. The London that has been so cruelly and ruthlessly wrecked was, with all its wonderful and romantic association, not, materially considered, the finest city that ever was built—Grant Allen called it sixty years ago a "squalid village." We were and are full of affection for it, but the ugly child of the family is often the

mother's favourite. But it is legitimate to hope that the city to be erected will be finer in every way. Slums will, we hope, disappear; narrow crooked inconvenient streets and alleys will, we hope, be replaced by dignified and convenient thoroughfares; pokey houses, shops and offices will, we hope, give place to roomy and hygienic premises; rows of ill-built and badly designed cottages will, we hope, be superseded by commodious and decent-looking homes. And such schemes for improvement would, we can gather from Dickens's writings, have rejoiced his heart.

May the new city become the source of new inspirations, and may as great historical literary and romantic associations gather round it as gathered round the city that has so largely become a memory.

Mourn as we may for the wreckage of all that has been so dear to us, we do look forward to a bright, nay a brighter future, not only for the city but for the people alive now and for those who will come after us. The past is past and belongs to the past, much as we loved it. The future is ours for the making. Let us Dickensians help to make that future a worthy one.

Resurgam, and again Resurgam. War will not last for ever, but London must and Dickens's fame will. Let us follow our Dickensian Star in the East. Its brilliance was never more refulgent and never more necessary. Peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety; and perfect freedom—freedom of thought and action: these must be our aim, as they were the ideals for which Dickens lived and strove. Never was it more urgent that we should revere his name and perpetuate his Immortal Memory.

## ST. PANCRAS BRANCH IN WAR TIME

This Branch, founded in 1920 by the late Mr. S. J. Rust (whose memory is still cherished) has continued its activities without ceasing throughout the war period, notwithstanding that St. Pancras has been one of the most heavily bombed districts in London, and that the greater number of the members live many miles away. This has not deterred them from actively supporting the attractive meetings arranged by the Presidents of 1939, 1940, 1941, and the very able committee. With a war-time membership of fifty, the attendance at each monthly meeting has averaged forty, and each meeting seems to gain in popularity, thanks to the many clever speakers, who have given time and thought to their subjects. Members of Headquarters and other London branches also attend, receiving a hearty welcome, and the feeling of real Fellowship prevails. St. Pancras is justly proud of the fact that Dickens lived in the borough, and though many of the houses are altered out of recognition, yet "Wellington House Academy" is intact, and stands in Hampstead Road, quite close to scenes of enemy activity.

Thanks to the generosity of Overseas branches, many of the poor bombed-out children of St. Pancras have been assisted in many ways, all given through the Branch in the name of Charles Dickens.

On September 13th Mr. O. D. Savage will speak on "A Londoner Remembers."

# CIRCUMLOCUTION

No public business of any kind could possibly be done at any time, without the acquiescence of the Circumlocution Office.

* * * * *

Whatever was required to be done, the Circumlocution Office was beforehand with all the public departments in the art of perceiving—How not to do it.

* * * * *

All the business of the country went through the Circumlocution Office, except the business that never came out of it ; and *its* name is Legion.

* * * * *

The Barnacle family had for some time helped to administer the Circumlocution Office. . . . The Barnacles were a very high family and a very large family. They were dispersed all over the public offices.

* * * * *

It is competent to any member of the—public, to memorialise the Circumlocution Office. Such formalities as are required to be observed in so doing, may be known on application to the proper branch of the Department.

* * * * *

The Department is accessible to the—public, if the—public approaches it according to the official forms ; if the—public does not approach it according to the official forms, the—public has itself to blame.

* * * * *

"Look here. Upon my soul, you mustn't come into this place saying you want to know, you know."

* * * * *

You'll find out what Department the Contract was in . . . then you'll memorialise that Department (according to regular forms which you will find out) for leave to memorialise this Department. If you get it (which you may after a time), that Memorial must be entered in that Department, sent to be registered in this Department, sent back to be signed by that Department, sent back to be countersigned by this Department, and then it will begin to be regularly before this Department. You'll find out when the business passed through each of these stages, by asking at both Departments till they tell you.

* * * * *

When the business is regularly before that Department, then you can watch it from time to time through that Department. When it comes regularly before this Department, then you must watch it from time to time through this Department. We shall have to refer it right and left ; and when we refer it anywhere, then you'll have to look it up. When it comes back to us at any time then you had better look *us* up. When it sticks anywhere, you'll have to try to give it a jog.

* * * * *

When you write to another Department about it, and then to this Department about it, and don't hear anything satisfactory about it, why then you had better—keep on writing.

* * * * *

You had better take a lot of forms away with you ! Give him a lot of forms !

# A DICKENS DIARY FOR 1837

## Compiled from Contemporary Sources

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1ST, 1837.

A very quiet New Year's Day; only Mary and Fred. Kate bears up very well. No. 1 of Bentley's Miscellany looks brave; shall see it on sale to-morrow. Hope Tulrumble will make a hit.*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5TH, 1837.

Macrone paid me £100 to day for the copyright of the second series Sketches. The money was very welcome at this time. Chained to Mr. Pickwick all this week.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6TH, 1837.

Thank God all is over; a fine boy born this evening at quarter past six o'clock. Kate remarkably well, and underwent the ordeal bravely. Of course I have not been able to do any work to-day.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10TH, 1837.

See Collier in Morning.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 1837.

Hear Village Coquettes went off wretchedly; no wonder when the theatre with the worst company charges the highest prices. Braham says "Write plenty of orders"; have done fifty. This opera in every way nothing but a source of loss and annoyance to me. Cramer doesn't pay. Hullah at six.

Kate not so well. Too bothered to write much.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 15TH, 1837.

Sent Harley copy of second series Sketches.

MONDAY, JANUARY 16TH, 1837.

All day touching up other peoples' work for the Miscellany; no time for my own. Kate no better.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18TH, 1837.

Believe Oliver will make a feature in the work and become very popular. I have thrown my heart and soul into it.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 1837.

Kate very low; alarming state; am constantly with her as she will take nourishment from no other person.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 1837.

Thank God, month's work finished; under what great disadvantages ! !

* Dickens's only contribution to the first number—*The Public Life of Mr. Tulrumble once Mayor of Mudfog.*

Sunday, January 22nd, 1837.

Kate no better; Got Pickthorn to physic me; head and stomach trouble. He orders medicine in doses that would be given to an ordinary sized horse.

Tuesday, January 24th, 1837.

Pickthorn at 6. Kate's state continues to alarm me. Had violent pains in my head last night again. Must slow down; don't think it would harm Bentley's if no Oliver next month; have good subjects but cannot write under these combined disadvantages.

Monday, January 30th, 1837.

Kate and I much better, thank God. Bentley, New Burlington St., at 12, with Beard. Done a "Stray Chapter."* for Miscellany.

Thursday, February 2nd, 1837.

Sent John Forster of The Examiner copies of both series of the Sketches, with a wish that he will accept them rather for my sake than for theirs.

Monday, February 6th, 1837.

Saw Harley with my new farce "Is She His Wife?"

Saturday, February 11th, 1837.

To Mrs. Nash's at Chalk, for a fortnight's quiet and rest; and to celebrate an anniversary too—the first. Worked on the altered Farce and got it off per night mail to young Hogarth for copying.

Wednesday, February 15th, 1837.

By boat from Gravesend, to look for a house. Delayed at Bentleys, missed the steamer, so went to Chalk by Dover coach. Finished off a chapter of Oliver at Furnival's.

Wednesday, February 22nd, 1837.

Finished at last; no joke keeping two stories running together to say nothing of Bentleys into the bargain.

Thursday, February 23rd, 1837.

To Chapman's about Pickwick and Bentley's about Oliver; then house-hunting again. Doughty Street undoubtedly good position close to Mecklenburg Square. Nearly missed the coach to Chalk and had to forego calling on John Forster.

Saturday, February 25th, 1837.

Beard to come down by first boat; then to Chatham with Kate. Dinner at the Sun—very snug.

Sunday, February 26th, 1837.

With Johns at Chatham Barracks.

* *The Pantomime of Life* appeared in the March Number of "Bentley's Miscellany."

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, 1837.

Forster in the morning.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1ST, 1837.

Wrote specially for Harley to sing at his Benefit "A Whitebait Dinner at Blackwall" to the tune of an old Scotch Air. He says he will do it in the character of Mr. Pickwick.

MONDAY, MARCH 6TH, 1837.

St. James's. "Is She His Wife?"

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8TH, 1837.

The Times, not knowing the farce is by me, says "it is one of the cleverest that has been produced for some time . . . the plot . . . so dexterously and delicately managed that its success was decided." The Chronicle is scant of praise.

MONDAY, MARCH 13TH, 1837.

Harley's benefit at St. James's "Is she his wife?" and "The Strange Gentleman"; this is his fifty-eighth appearance—and Braham says the last for this season. He has not done so badly.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14TH, 1837.

The Times to-day says that Harley as Pickwick was the chief event of the evening, although the song "not altogether worthy of the clever author Boz." They said nothing about the Farce, although, for the first time, Boz appeared as its author.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17TH, 1837.

Signed new agreement with Bentley; engagement now for five years, with his option for further five years; twelve months notice or £250 in lieu thereof; £10 per month additional on sale reaching 6000 copies and £5 per 500 copies over that grand number.

THURSDAY, MARCH 23RD, 1837.

Settled on No. 48 Doughty Street; for three years at eighty pounds per annum from Lady Day, that is to say Saturday next.

MONDAY, MARCH 27TH, 1837.

No time to work; moving plays the very devil.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29TH, 1837.

This morning Chapman's celebrated the first year of Pickwick by presenting me with a cheque for £500; most honourable conduct.

FRIDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1837.

Finished another Stray Chapter* for Miscellany.

* *Some Particulars Concerning a Lion* appeared in the May Number.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1ST, 1837.

Called on John Forster to ask him to dine with us to-morrow, but were unfortunate not to find him at home.

FRIDAY, APRIL 7TH, 1837.

Oliver's reception of Fagin and the boys should go with a bang and make a good subject for Cruikshank. Did 11 slips this morning.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8TH, 1837.

Dinner at Chapman & Hall to celebrate a year of Pickwick. 6.

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH, 1837.

St. James's Theatre ; " Village Coquettes."

SUNDAY, MAY 7TH, 1837.

We are in severe and deep distress ; poor dear Mary died in my arms this afternoon at five o'clock. Apparently in the best of health last night at the theatre ; was taken ill in the night, and lies here a corpse. The grace and life of our home.

MONDAY, MAY 8TH, 1837.

The medical men are of opinion that her heart had been diseased for a long time. This dreadful event has plunged us into the greatest misery. She has left a blank which no one who ever knew her can have the faintest hope of seeing supplied.

TUESDAY, MAY 9TH, 1837.

Kate is prostrated with grief, although her fortitude is remarkable to behold, and a great consolation to her mother.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10TH, 1837.

As the day for the funeral approaches, I realise that the bitterest part of this calamity is at hand. I hope that, for that one day at all events, I may be able to bear my part in it with fortitude, and to encourage and console those about me. It will be no harder trial to anyone than myself.

SATURDAY, MAY 13TH, 1837.

It is impossible to do my monthly work ; must get away from this un-nerving scene. Kate prostrate in bed.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 17TH, 1837.

I think I have chosen just the spot for a fortnight's quiet and change of scene. Collins's Farm, Northend, Hampstead. Kate is better already. The first burst of my grief has passed and I can think of her calmly and dispassionately. I solemnly believe that so perfect a creature never breathed. I knew her inmost heart, and her real worth and values. She had not a fault.

FRIDAY, MAY 19TH, 1837.

Preface to First Volume Miscellany. Done.

Tuesday, May 30th, 1837.

Ainsworth.

Friday, June 2nd, 1837.

Sent Forster advance copies of the Miscellany ; he has such a perception of what is required in good story writing that I shall always be proud of his advice—and doubtless profit by it.

Saturday, June 3rd, 1837.

Riding with Forster who again full of high praise of Oliver. Kate ill from grief and agitation, brought on miscarriage.

Must have a magistrate to "shew up" in next number. Laing of Hatton Garden is the man. Beard recommends me to get in touch with Haines who is in charge of the Press reporters for the City Courts. Should be admirable subject.

Tuesday, June 6th, 1837.

Forster to dinner.

Friday, June 9th, 1837.

The binder of Pickwick told me of Macrone's intention to republish the Sketches in monthly parts, same size and form as Pickwick. Went to Chapmans, who are alarmed at the damage both might suffer. They are ready to buy the copyrights ; if not am determined to advertise everywhere that the publication is without my sanction. Query : Forster to see Macrone.

Saturday, June 10th, 1837.

Much touched by beautiful present from Forster ; ardently hope that our friendship may be lasting and sincere.

Monday, June 12th, 1837.

Riding with Forster. Discussed Macrone position.

Friday, June 16th, 1837.

With Forster to see Macready's Othello ; afterwards introduced to him in his room ; much impressed by his lofty bearing. I was pleased to hear him say he knew my works.

Saturday, June 17th, 1837.

Charley's christening.*

Macrone has driven a hard bargain with Chapman & Hall ; he gets Two thousand pounds for the Sketches ; a handsome profit out of my work, and a millstone round my neck ; but it is better thus.

Sunday, June 18th, 1837.

Dine at Talfourd's with Forster, Macready, Procter, Prince, and Hayter a Chancery barrister.

Monday, June 19th, 1837.

Rose at 12, after the most virtuous and inflexible resolutions to be up at 7. Not written a word.

* Scored through. It did not take place until 9th December.

Tuesday, June 20th, 1837.

To settle Pickwick at C. & H. Meet Forster there.

Thursday, June 22nd, 1837.

Correcting Miscellany proofs all morning; must make a start on Oliver to-day. Revise of No. 15 Pickwick to Forster for his opinion.

Saturday, June 24th, 1837.

Money handed over and receipt signed; that is the end of Macrone. Getting anxious about position with Bentley; can't find the agreement.

Tuesday, June 27th, 1837.

Out on a Prison jaunt with Forster, Browne and Cattermole; Macready called, and Fred directed him to Cold Bath Fields. Then to Newgate where among prisoners under remand was Wainewright. "My God, there's Wainewright," cried Macready in a tragic voice. He was deeply affected—nay horrified—for he had often dined at his table. A scene for a play—or a story.

Macready, Hogarth, Banks and Harley to dinner. Very cheerful with Harley as entertainer; excellent fun.

Saturday, July 1st, 1837.

We start to-day for a ten days' Summer holiday in Belgium with Browne. Kate excited at the prospect. At Dover received Examiner with Forster's beautiful notice of Pickwick: "In this number the author has achieved his masterpiece" he says. How can I sufficiently thank him; he writes from his heart.

Sunday, July 2nd, 1837.

At Hotel Rignolle, Calais. Can't get Bentley out of my head. Must have copy of agreement and he must increase his terms, otherwise I cannot do my work. This afternoon in a barouche to some gardens; dancing; women very agreeable in their short petticoats and light caps.

The courier we took from the hotel, waltzed elegantly with a smart lady, turned out to be the Boots. How French!

To-morrow we go to Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp and a hundred other places that I cannot recollect, and couldn't spell if I did. Have hired a post-chaise.

Monday, July 10th, 1837.

Home again; bad crossing; very sick.

Tuesday, July 11th, 1837.

Called on Macready; walked with him to Garrick Club where met Forster. In evening dined at Mrs. Buller's with Macready; later came Thackeray, John Mill, Martineau, Hawes, Starley, Miss Martineau, Miss Austin.

Wednesday, July 12th, 1837.

Wrote little yesterday, but something. Bentley at 2. Forster after. I don't recollect one word of the alleged agreement. This morning in

unpoetical state, hammered out the infernal Song of the Month, a rum 'un.

FRIDAY, JULY 14TH, 1837.

Put amended clauses before Bentley—who is in Brighton. . £600 for 3,000 copies B.R.; whole MS. to be supplied by 1 March 1838. £700 for O.T., MS. by 24th June, same number. This is final.

A rose tree and few flowers for dear Mary's grave—Ainsworth.

SATURDAY, JULY 15TH, 1837.

Letitia's wedding. Literary Fund Dinner Crown & Sceptre at Greenwich. Ainsworth. Jerdan. Forster.

MONDAY, JULY 17TH, 1837.

Must get to work in earnest to-day. Owe Forster £2. 10. 0. my two-thirds Crown and Sceptre flare.

TUESDAY, JULY 18TH, 1837.

Beard, at noon. Forster between 3 and 4. Done nothing. Dreamt of Bentley all night and am fierce.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 19TH, 1837.

Writing all the evening.

SATURDAY, JULY 22ND, 1837.

Beard and Harley to dinner. 5. Forster, no ride. No news as yet from the "infernal, rich, plundering, thundering, old Jew."

TUESDAY, JULY 25TH, 1837.

Getting on, thank Heaven, "like a house o' fire." Think the next Pickwick will bang all the others. Wish somebody would not ring the bell at St. Paul's so loudly; can hardly hear my own ideas as they come into my head. Forster at one. Can't get out—like the starling.

THURSDAY, JULY 27TH, 1837.

A most unique and beautiful present from Chapman & Hall. Shall lay it up in lavender for my boy to shew his boys—and girls. Very delicate and warm hearted feeling on their part—touched me deeply.

SATURDAY, JULY 29TH, 1837.

Braham asked me through Harley, what would be my terms for a new farce for the St. James's. I replied, one hundred pounds for a single act of about one hour; one hundred and fifty for two acts. I could not do it under in the present state of my work. With Forster, called on Macready and went for a long walk with him. I mentioned the comedy I should like to write for him.

MONDAY, JULY 31ST, 1837.

Heartily sick of the sixteenth Pickwick which I have sent to Hicks to-day.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 3RD, 1837.

Must get a month's relief from the Miscellany—or can't make a start with Oliver. I no sooner get myself high and dry to attack him manfully, than up come the waves of each month's work and drive me back again into a sea of manuscript.

Harley to dine at six.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9TH, 1837.

Letitia and Burnett, Cruikshank and wife, Harley, to dinner 5.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 12TH, 1837.

Ride at one with Forster; trial of tall black horse complete with saddle.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15TH, 1837.

Was quite in the humour for writing last night, and regularly set in when Hullah arrived unexpectedly; and as he stopped, I was stopped too. Am therefore a prisoner to-day—and evening too.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 17TH, 1837.

Ride with Forster. Qy chop at Jack Straw's.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND, 1837.

Better already after these few days at Broadstairs again, and abstention from malt-liquor for four-and-twenty hours. No place like it—or the Albion either; the landlord has such delicious Hollands.

Walked twice to Ramsgate since arrival, by sands at low water.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4TH, 1837.

Began Pickwick No. 18.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH, 1837.

Forster tells me of another dramatisation of Pickwick. Can nothing be done to stop them?

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1837.

Stuck high and dry; this work is becoming a burden. No Oliver for Miscellany this month.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 1837.

Dinner here at 5. Forster. Grand ride; fifteen miles out and in.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1837.

Hard at it. Will use whole of Mudfog Association in next month's Miscellany in place of Oliver not done.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, 1837.

Tendered resignation to Bentley as the only way out of the difficulty.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1837.

Bentley's solicitor went to Molloy unsolicited and offered increased

remuneration of 20 guineas monthly. He refused. "New Agreement and Copyright" is the War-cry.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1837.

Forster with Bentley and Follet settling my new agreement.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST, 1837.

New agreement three years, £30 monthly plus Twenty gns. for usual contribution one sheet.; half copyright mine. Ten pounds when sale each number exceeds 6000 copies plus £5 on every succeeding 500 copies. Oliver to be delivered by 1 May, payment £500 for three years copyright. Barnaby to be delivered October 1838 for £700. 3 years copyright; after that in both cases half the copyright to be mine.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1837.

Macready opens Covent Garden. Forster, Ainsworth, Procter and I in a box.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 1837.

Murray, presuming I suppose that any notice in the Quarterly must drive so young a man as myself nearly distracted with delight, sent me a copy of the Quarterly with Hayward's notice of Pickwick. I think he has rather visited upon me his recollection of my declining his intimate acquaintance; but as the notice contains a good deal of what I know to be true, I find little fault with it. I hope I may truly say that no writer ever had less vanity than I have.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10TH, 1837.

Newgate. Forster and Ainsworth to dine, 6. Cattermole too.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 1837.

Jack Straw's with Forster; red-'ot chop and a glass of good wine.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25TH, 1837.

Passed proofs to-day of final (double) number of Pickwick which comes out on Monday. I hope the special address to Talfourd will please him; I feel sure it will.

Mrs. Hogarth's present revives in me thoughts of HER; although it is true to say that, sleeping or waking, I have never lost the recollection of our hard trial and sorrow, and I feel that I never shall. I have never had her ring off my finger, since she died; I have never had her sweetness and excellence absent from my mind.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31ST, 1837.

To Brighton—Ship Hotel—for a week.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST, 1837.

Weather so stormy that Kate scarcely able to peep out of doors. A perfect hurricane this morning, breaking windows, knocking down shutters, carrying people off their legs and causing universal consternation. Charles Kean in Othello at the Theatre—last night of his stay. Wonder if he ever got to the Theatre; sure nobody else did.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2ND, 1837.

The Honeymoon at Theatre. Have resisted all temptation to put my hands on Fagin, as I came here to be IDLE. Bought a copy of Defoe's History of the Devil for a couple of shillings. Capital.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH, 1837.

Places booked for return. Forster to call after 6.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH, 1837.

Ainsworth at Kensal Lodge.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH, 1837.

Pickwick Celebration at De Gex. No. 1. Leicester Place.*

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH, 1837.

Forster at 3. Wrote Preface Volume Two of Miscellany.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 1837.

Pickwick Dinner. Forster, Talfourd, Macready, Ainsworth, Jerdan, Tom Hill. Chapman, Hall, Browne.

Chapman & Hall to-day paid me Six hundred and forty three pounds the balance due to me on the Pickwick Papers, constituting a purchase by them of two thirds interest in the copyright.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH, 1837.

Opened account at Coutts with £500 out of the £643 received from C. & H. Sent Godfather Huffam ten pounds.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, 1837.

Signed agreement with Bentley to edit the memoirs of Grimaldi prepared by Wilks, for £300 and half the net gains ; to be ready about 20th January ; not bad for two month's work.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 1837.

Paid Doctor £18 12. 6.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 1837.

Paid De Gex £41 7. 4. for Pickwick do.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH, 1837.

Charley's Christening. 12, New Pancridge. Beard and sisters, Burnetts, Lovers, Forster in evening.

Charley took measles to celebrate the occasion, but "He's got em very mild."

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 1837.

Hunt's comment on the grave at Kensal Green, in such delicately chosen words received through Forster, have aroused in me the only feeling akin to pleasure (sorrowful pleasure it is) that I have yet had connected with the loss of my dear young friend and companion, by

* This entry is cancelled. The celebration was held on the Saturday following.

whose side, please God, my bones whenever or wherever I die, will one day be laid.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH, 1837.

Called on Macready, who is much annoyed at Talfourd's egregious folly and weakness regarding his advice on the libels in The Age. Thinks Bunn is the author—or possibly Westmacott.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH, 1837.

Talfourd, Ainsworth, horse-riding at 10.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 1837.

Much gratified at receiving a letter from Edinburgh informing me of the institution of a Pickwick Club there, the first society of its kind to be established North of the Tweed. ; painfully reminded me of that dear companion who drew her first breath in Edinburgh and died beside me.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26TH, 1837.

To C.G. to see rehearsal of the Pantomime, with Forster and Cattermole. Also watched Macready rehearsing Lord Hastings. All agreed it was time to quit the Garrick.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28TH, 1837.

Dined with Macready. Forster, the Talfourds, Miss Ely, Fitzgeralds, Cattermole, Stanfield also present. Afterwards to the theatre. Chadwick.

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# THE A. EDWARD NEWTON LIBRARY

MANY important rarities were comprised in the sale of the above Library at the Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, in April last, the most interesting being the twenty-one copies of the works presented by Dickens to various friends, and inscribed by him. As the items are important, a full list is given below, with the sale prices appended. Two of them fetched over $1,000 each ; a few vagaries will be noticed. A copy of *A Christmas Carol* presented to Thomas Beard secured a higher price than a similar copy presented to Thomas Hood, whilst a copy of *The Cricket on the Hearth*, presented to Beard, fetched much less than a copy of the same work inscribed the same day to Macready.

The highest figure in the Dickens portion of the sale was $3,500 for the Bruton-Patterson copy of *Pickwick*.

The original dedication of *The Village Coquettes* in the form of a letter addressed to J. P. Harley was sold for $1,150, and is now in the library of Count de Suzannet.

Two water-colour drawings by John Leech were also in the sale, "The Last of the Spirits" went for $800, and surprisingly, the very next item, "Scrooge's Third Visitor," fetched more than three times that figure, viz., $2,600.

There were other surprises at this sale ; a copy of *Pictures from Italy*,

first edition, in worn condition, sold for $7·50 (we bought a spotless copy the other day from an English bookseller's catalogue for five shillings).

SKETCHES BY BOZ. Two vols. in one, 1836. Bound crimson morocco. Inscribed in Vol. I: *Simon McGillivray Esq. From the Author.* $300.

SUNDAY UNDER THREE HEADS. 1836. Half morocco. Inscribed: *Thomas Mitton Esq. From the Author.* $925.

THE PICKWICK PAPERS. 1837. Green morocco. Inscribed: *George Thomson* Esq. *From his very faithfully Charles Dickens.* $550.

OLIVER TWIST. Three vols. 1838. Half morocco. Inscribed in Vol. I: *W. C. Macready Esquire From his sincere friend and admirer Charles Dickens.* $450.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY. 1839. Green morocco. Inscribed: *J. P. Harley Esquire From his friend Charles Dickens.* $400.

BARNABY RUDGE. 1841. Full calf. Inscribed *W. C. Macready From his affectionate friend Charles Dickens Christmas* 1941. $300.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP. 1841. Full calf. Inscribed *W. C. Macready from his affectionate friend Charles Dickens Christmas* 1841. $475.

AMERICAN NOTES. Two vols. 1842. Full red morocco. Inscribed *W. C. Macready From his friend Charles Dickens Eighteenth October* 1842. $700.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL. 1843. Inscribed: *Thomas Beard, From his old friend Charles Dickens Nineteenth December* 1843. $825.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL. 1843. Inscribed: *Thomas Hood From His Friend and earnest admirer Charles Dickens.* $500.

THE CHIMES. 1858. Full red morocco. Inscribed: *Charles Dickens Junior From his affectionate father Charles Dickens Seventh September* 1858. $700.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH. 1846. Inscribed: *W. C. Macready From his friend Charles Dickens* 18*th December* 1845. $1000.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH. 1846. Inscribed: *Thomas Beard Esq. From his old friend Charles Dickens* 18*th December* 1845. $600.

THE HAUNTED MAN. 1848. Inscribed: *Daniel Maclise From his old friend Charles Dickens Fourteenth December* 1848. $424.

DAVID COPPERFIELD. 1850. Full red morocco. Inscribed: *W. C. Macready From his affectionate friend Charles Dickens Third December* 1850. $400.

CHRISTMAS BOOKS. 1852. Half red morocco. Inscribed: *Charles Dickens To Maria Winter. In remembrance of old times.* $725.

BLEAK HOUSE. 1853. Half red morocco. Inscribed: *Dudley Costello From Charles Dickens Third October* 1853. $375.

LITTLE DORRIT. 1857. Half calf. Inscribed: *Faithfully yours Charles Dickens; Tavistock House London Monday Fourteenth December* 1857. $240.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES. 1859. Half red morocco. Inscribed: *Charles Dickens to W. H. Wills Sixth December* 1859. $275.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS. 1861. Three vols. Inscribed in Vol. I: *Henry F. Chorley From Charles Dickens July* 1861. $1100.

OUR MUTUAL FRIEND. Two vols. 1865. Half red morocco. Inscribed in Vol. I: *Charles Dickens to William Henry Wills Seventh November* 1865. $300.

# A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF THE READINGS

THE following extracts are from "Town Talk," January 5th and July 3rd, 1858, respectively:

For years there has been no such intellectual treat for the London public as Mr. Dickens's readings of his Christmas books. The enormous St. Martin's Hall is thronged on every occasion, and hundreds are turned away. The string of carriages extends to Leicester Square. On the first morning reading of the *Carol*, a most fashionable audience assembled: very many celebrities were present. In the front row of the stalls, seated by Miss Burdett Coutts, was Sir James Brooke, the Rajah of Sarawak; and close behind might have been seen the enormous beard of Mr. Albert Smith, who laughed and cried, like any child, at the various portions of the reading. For the information of those who have not been present, we will sketch Mr. Dickens's portrait in pen and ink:

He is about forty-five years old, rather above the middle height, and of a slight lithe figure: if you did not know who he was you would take him, at first glance, for some remarkable man; his is a decidedly striking face, rather long and thin, with shaved cheeks, a moustache and pointed beard. His hair is light brown, long and silky; his forehead broad and high, but his eyes are his most remarkable feature, dark brown in colour, and flashing when he is animated with extraordinary brilliancy. His voice is deep and sonorous, capable of exquisite modulation, and of expressing the deepest feeling. The pathos which he throws into one short line in the *Carol*, where the Cratchit family are mourning their lost child—"The colour! Ah! poor Tiny Tim!" cannot be described. One slight peculiarity may be noticed, a hissing manner of pronouncing the letter "s."

There is no doubt that many of the audience come simply for the purpose of looking at the man who has, for so many years, been an unknown though most familiar friend; but when once he commences, their interest is aroused, and those who came to gaze remain to listen.

* * * * *

Perhaps the only author of the present day who is at the same time thoroughly appreciated and celebrated, is Charles Dickens; and this may be accounted for by the fact that all his works, despite the descents as to the lowest class, and the occasional sketches of fashionable life contained in them, are essentially identified with the larger order of our society, the middle class of England. With these people—and the class comprehends all, from the many-acred squire and the rich merchant down to the poor clerk and struggling tradesman—with their hopes and fears, their struggles and temptations, their loves and hatreds, with every action of their daily lives he is perfectly familiar; and by his crowd of odd, quaint, out-of-the way characters, his careful pictures of eccentricity, his smart conversations and wonderful descriptions he appeals to the heart and understanding of every reader, to the grave and the gay, to young and to old, to the reflective and the thoughtless; he holds in his hand the keys that open the way for the genii of mirth and sorrow, and lets forth either at his will for the delectation of the civilized world. More than this, so appreciated is he, so recognized, so believed in, that not only are his creations accepted

as types of the characters they are intended to represent, but by the names which he has bestowed upon them we actually recognize their nature: thus, a dropsical bloated cotton umbrella is a "Gamp"; we speak of any humbug of our acquaintance as Pecksniff, and know every boarding-house as Todgers's.

The extent of Mr. Dickens's popularity and its ramifications into all classes of society is visible in the quality of the audiences which assemble in St. Martin's Hall. If you are accustomed to the frequenters of the Lectures at Literary Institutions, and such like places, you will know them to be a dry, mouldy, unpleasant class; composed principally of foolish virgins, who simper and smirk, because they have no better amusement, and fierce, rigid, implacable old maids who have known better things, and who take up with intellectual pursuits as a last resource. There are never any young men or boys present, except the miserable lads who are brought in a chained gang from the neighbouring school, nor is there but a slight sprinkling of "the lower orders." At Mr. Dickens's readings all classes seem to be represented in the stalls, the pretty *coiffures* and elegant attire of the ladies, and the quiet appearance and faultless neatness of the men, shew that Beauty and Fashion are among them; in the half-crown seats is to be found pleasant bald and grey-headed respectability (the last word being used even in its gig-keeping sense), jolly mothers, blushing daughters, attentive young men in thriving businesses, while as for the "lower orders," we'll trouble you to look round among the shilling-paying people, when the description of the Cratchit Christmas dinner is going on, and see with what power of lungs and hands they attest to the truth of the description of what they themselves have so often gone through!

To all persons with a thought beyond the mere fribble and tomfoolery of fashion, these readings have been the great treat of the London season, and there is no doubt, judging from the experience already gained, that Mr. Dickens's provincial tour will be a series of ovations. His is no surgical genius, no aptitude for discovering loathsome sores and festering wounds, and traces of incipient disease, but a healthy, sound, and honest talent, touched by which we rise up more fitted to temper with humanities the natural savageness engendered in this work-a-day world, and to believe that for some of us the sun really shines and that there are such things as peace and love now, and forgiveness in the future.

## WHO WHAT AND WHERE OF *BARNABY RUDGE?*

(*Answers to Questions on page* 154)

1, Miggs; 2, Golden Key; 3, The Boot; 4, Joe Willet; 5, 60; 6, Caen Wood; 7, Miggs; 8, The Protestant Manual; 9, Bloomsbury Square; 10, Gashford; 11, March 19th; 12, No. 27 Golden Lion Court; 13, Hugh's mother; 14, Parish clerk and bell-ringer; 15, At a house near Moorfields; 16, Mrs. Varden; 17, The gallows; 18, The Temple; 19, Sim Tappertit; 20, The Black Lion; 21, The Warren; 22, Gashford; 23, The Maypole Inn; 24, Canterbury; 25, Gabriel Varden; 26, They shook his elbows; 27, At the Crooked Billet; 28, Miggs, to Varden; 29, Foster-mother; 30, In a cellar near Barbican; 31, Sim Tappertit, of his legs; 32, (*a*) 20, (*b*) 20, (*c*) 23, (*d*) 27, (*e*) 22, (*f*) about 42; 33, At the Maypole; 34, Servants to Sir John Chester and Lord George Gordon; 35, Blue; 36, Behind the Foundling Hospital; 37, Dennis; 38, Head jailer at Newgate; 39, At Doughty Street.

# WIZARDS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH

By J. H. McNULTY

[T might seem at first sight that Dickens and Scott had little or nothing in common. Scott was something of an aristocrat, Dickens a man of the people. Scott a conservative, Dickens a radical, Scott a man of learning with a vast store of knowledge, Dickens a natural genius with a very scanty education. Scott ransacked the ages for subjects and scenes for his novels, Dickens for the most part stayed at home and kept to his own age. They were both good men and great authors, and there, it would appear, all further similarity ceased; but it is not so. An examination of their works proves the contrary, and shows many points of agreement. It is not a matter of imitation; there is only one doubtful instance of that. Their methods and outlook are often far closer than would be expected, and on fundamental matters the Wizard of the North and the Magician of the South are generally in complete accord.

Scott chose his subjects from many epochs of history; his scenes are laid in many lands, but he is at his best only in his Scotch novels. Dickens made few excursions into foreign countries; the splendid tragedy of *A Tale of Two Cities* took him to Paris, the American episode in *Martin Chuzzlewit* to the New World. These are his successes. Look at the opening chapters of *Little Dorrit*: what a relief it is to return to London after the horrible scene in Marseilles. Clennam arrives home on a wet Sunday evening and London at such a time in Dickens's day must have looked pretty dismal; yet the reader is renewed. Dickens has returned to his old love London; he is now at home and all will be well.

Neither Dickens nor Scott was generally successful in the short story. They liked to expand, to wander from the main theme of the book and to return to it as and when they chose. The conditions of the short story were cramping to such giants, yet they frequently wrote these stories and sometimes with great success. There are many such stories told in *The Pickwick Papers*, and the Story of Gabriel Grub and of Tom Smart, are both excellent, while Scott in "Wandering Willie's Tale" from "Redgauntlet," achieved a masterpiece.

Dickens often gave his characters a favourite phrase which they like to repeat. Mr. Micawber waiting for "something to turn up," Mark Tapley "coming out strong." We might call it their *leit motif*, or in the jargon of to-day "their signature tune." Scott also occasionally used a similar device. Lady Bellenden is always alluding to "his sacred Majesty," and Colonel Dalgetty never tires of referring to "the Marischal College of Aberdeen," while Dominie Sampson seldom opens his mouth without exclaiming "Prodigious."

The one place where Dickens may have been influenced by Scott, though this is not certain, is in Mr. Pickwick's discovery of the famous stone with the strange inscription. According to the man who cut it, it meant "Bill Stumps his mark," but such an explanation could not, of course, be accepted by Mr. Pickwick, nor by the Pickwick Club, nor

by the seventeen learned societies to whom the wretched Mr. Blotton sent his pamphlet. In "The Antiquary" Monkbarns also makes a discovery—a stone with the inscription A.D.L.L., which he, with the vivid imagination of a man crammed with learning, interprets "Agricola dicavit libens lubens," which may be translated "Agricola dedicated this with good will and pleasure." Edie Ochiltree knew that the inscription meant nothing of the sort, and that the letters A.D.L.L. stood for "Aiken Drum's Lang Ladle."

Monkbarns would not accept this explanation any more than Mr. Pickwick would accept that of Mr. Blotton or Mr. Stumps. The antiquary valued his discovery so highly, proving as he thought that the place was the site of the final conflict between Agricola and the Caledonians, that he exchanged acre for acre of good corn land for the barren spot.

Pickwick also valued his stone, and though he paid only ten shillings for it, we may be sure he would not have parted with it for a much larger sum. Monkbarns was learned and foolish; Pickwick was not learned but no wiser. There is some similarity too between the scenes when Pickwick and Guy Mannering make their first acquaintance of the law and its satellites. Mannering finds Mr. Pleydell at Clerihugh's "practising the ancient and now forgotten pastime of High Jinks and enthroned, as a monarch, in an elbow-chair, placed on the dining-table, his scratch wig on one side, his head crowned with a bottle-slider, his eye leering with an expression betwixt fun and the effects of wine, while his court around him resounded with crambo scraps of verse."

Pleydell's clerk, Driver, who was called in at a second interview, was also playing High Jinks at Luckie Woods in the Cowgate; when Mr. Pickwick wanted to consult Mr. Perker who was away and from home, he found his clerk Mr. Lowten at the Magpie and Stump singing a comic song and presiding over a choice company of lawyers' clerks.

The most important place where the two novelists are in complete agreement is in their treatment of the poor and unfortunate, while great soldiers and statesmen, kings and queens, pass through the pages of Scott, it is to the poor that he gives the finest parts and the noblest speeches. We recall the homely but moving eloquence of Edie Ochiltree, old Mause of the stuff of which martyrs are made, Dominie Sampson, a sort of Scotch Tom Pinch, or Jeanie Deans, Meg Merrilies, and a crowd of others. And we may feel sure that the great Scotch novelist would have sympathised with the love and kindness which Dickens had for the poor, the destitute and afflicted and the host of humble heroes and heroines who fill his pages.

Dickens dwelt for the most part with the poor, but could describe with sympathy those in a higher social position. Scott mixed with kings, yet never lost the common touch. Here we leave these two great novelists who have done so much to enrich our literature and to increase the sum of human happiness.

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Have you sent your subscription as a Friend of The Dickens House? See page 229.

# THE FIRST DICKENS SALE

COMPILED, WITH COMMENTS, BY OLIVER D. SAVAGE

OBJECTS which were once the property of the famous have a universal interest, although they may be viewed from various mental angles; one man's interest being, for example, sentimental, and another's, financial. A public sale of such objects, therefore, always provides an attraction, even for those who are not intending buyers. It must be admitted at the same time that the interest is strongly tinged with melancholy, the occasion being a reminder of the mortality which is the common lot of the famous as well as the obscure.

"Chambers's Journal" for August 6th, 1870, contains an article entitled "At Dickens's Sale."* A few excerpts from this contemporary report are well worth reprinting; considered in the light of later knowledge and subsequent events they make interesting reading.

"A large dingy room in King Street, St. James's, hung round with soiled green baize, the haunt of brokers and speculators, has been of late the scene of two most interesting events—the sale of the manuscripts of Walter Scott, and the effects of Charles Dickens. . . .

"If . . . the autograph manuscript of *Pickwick* had been included . . . we verily believe that it would have sold for its weight in gold. . . . It was by Mr. Dickens's express desire that this sale took place. In the (temporary) silence of detraction, and amid the hush of a genuine national sorrow, there has been heard a complaint against the great novelist's representatives that they should have permitted his goods to be put up at auction, and the private treasures of his home to be scattered through the land. But Charles Dickens was far too free-handed and generous a man to die rich: his heirs, he well knew, could ill afford to keep in their possession that which, if resigned to other hands, might—and, as the event proved, did—realise a fortune in itself. Moreover, as for the so-called 'objects of art'—mere household treasures—we (who knew him well) can easily believe that it was his desire that those who loved him from afar, and might not so much as have seen his face, should have the chance to take away with them, if they would, to their homes some relic, however trifling, of him whom, of all men, has striven to make home a sacred word with them. If there had been seven hundred of these objects, instead of seventy (as there were), there would have been eager purchasers for all. . . .

"The assemblage was even more motley than might have been expected on such an occasion. . . . There was the art-collector, of course, and—a very different (and indifferent) character—the art-speculator: the man of taste, who comes to criticise, and not to buy: the man who comes to buy at all events, and independently of the object; and the man who wishes to buy, but is too nervous to bid. The Jew broker, of course, was there, as elsewhere (and how significantly he tapped his nose at the prices!): the old gentleman who starts the bidding for the one thousand pound picture with half-a-crown, and puffs with relief when the responsibility is taken out of his mouth: the strong-minded woman, who comes with her husband, and refrigerates him with a whisper when he gets heated by rivalry, and but for her would ejaculate '*and* a 'arf, *and* a 'arf' till he was a

* By Christie, Manson and Woods, on July 9th, 1870.

beggar. . . . All these were there ; but with them mingled, and outnumbered them, faces evidently quite unaccustomed to the scene, and only interested in the particular event of the day. These were chiefly of the lower-middle class—the last, perhaps, of all classes to feel the subtle spell of genius—come to do homage to him who had often shaken their fat sides with mirth, and sometimes even drawn their tardy tears. Mrs. Gamp, who of all persons was the very last we should have expected to see present, was nevertheless to be beheld in person, brandishing her umbrella and pattens (for the day was wet), and making much the same sensation among her neighbours as a windmill in motion, or a scythed chariot. She ' put out ' even good-natured Mrs. Jarley, who had come up from the country—having leisure, through her waxworks being melted by the heat—to buy, if it should chance to go ' anyway reasonable,' Mr. Topham's picture of her old friend Little Nell. . . .

" It was clear from the outset that the Public were resolved to let nothing slip, however intrinsically valueless, without a struggle. The first that had any direct association with the Man himself—a little picture of the ' Britannia,' the vessel in which he made his first visit to America—evoked a fierce contention, and eventually produced the large bid of 105 guineas ; for the next picture, an infinitely superior one, by the same artist (Stanfield), but which had no such personal interest attaching to it, realised, on the other hand, a much smaller sum. A water-colour drawing by Sir David Wilkie, presented to the great novelist by the artist himself—a sketch for the ' Cotter's Saturday Night '—brought 130 guineas ; while ' Little Nell and her Grandfather in the Tent, making Bouquets for the Racecourse,' fetched 275. A most humorous little picture, ' Mrs. F's Aunt, from *Little Dorrit*,' not much larger than the palm of one's hand, had excited our own mdoest desires, and we fondly hoped to become possessed of it ; but others had entertained the same design with better means for its accomplishment, and it was knocked down, after a sharp struggle, for sixty guineas. Webster's brimstone and treacle scene at Dotheboys Hall, though but a cabinet picture, fetched 510 guineas ; and ' Dolly Varden,' by Frith—a real masterpiece—no less a sum than a thousand —a consummation that was received with cheers. . . . Presently a very large picture by Stanfield, the ' Eddystone Lighthouse '—with a fine sea on, that it caused Mr. Sapsea to observe that he who purchased it need scarce take his family to the coast this autumn—was disrobed of the baize that had concealed it. This piece had been painted in illustration of Mr. Wilkie Collins's drama of ' The Lighthouse,' in which Mr. Dickens so distinguished himself as an actor ; and the remembrance of his success upon the boards seem to awake a new enthusiasm for the versatile genius that was never to charm us afresh. The work was knocked down for 990 guineas. A picture in similar illustration of ' The Frozen Deep,' and one of ' A Man-of-War,' both, like the first, ' presented by the artist,' realised between them 325 guineas. . . .

" There was great excitement when Maclise's great picture of Dickens, painted in 1839, and presented to him by his publisher on the completion of *Nicholas Nickleby*, was placed before the crowd. But, alas, how few were left who could have recognised the Man as he then looked ! We had most of us been used to a very different Charles Dickens, not so handsome, perhaps, but with a more thought-worn face than this, and eyes of such an intense and earnest significance,

as could only be the fruit of a long experience of human life, and sympathy with its joys and woes. Mr. Maclise's picture fetched the comparatively small sum of 660 guineas. . . .

"The biddings for every little trinket were incessant, and broke from all parts of the room, like crackers ; it may give some idea of the prices realised, when we say that a little matchbox of walnut-wood —which could not at the most have cost five shillings—sold for five guineas ; and much the same proportion was preserved throughout. . . . There was a common gong on a deal stand, which was sold for a sum that so took his (the porter's) breath away that he could scarcely remove the article. . . . Even the general public had their reasons for wishing to possess this barbarous instrument. 'He was always fond of gongs,' says one of them in my ear (as if we were brothers, though we had never spoken before) ; 'don't you remember the weak-eyed young man and the gong at Dr. Blimber's !' Of course I remembered. 'Five guineas, ten guineas, twenty guineas, thirty guineas, thirty-one guineas—going, going, gong !

"But the most moving scene of all was when we saw his favourite raven—the Grip of *Barnaby Rudge*, and of all the world—the very bird which, when it was alive, he must have stroked and fed with his own hands ; the actual model which sat for one of his own characters ; we could hardly have been more excited if there had been presented to us the original of Sam Weller stuffed !

"Seriously, the power of genius could scarce have been more strikingly exhibited than in the rapturous cheers which hailed the appearance of this unprepossessing bird. 'Grip, Grip, Grip, Grip,' burst forth from all sides, as though the poor creature could really hear them call him. His sayings, 'I'm a devil, I'm a devil,' and 'never say die,' were freely quoted. . . . He was purchased at last, amid a whirlwind of applause, for £120. . . .

"There was one 'Lot' more with a personal interest belonging to it, the six Pickwick Ladies, presented to Mr. Dickens on the completion of that work. . . . Mr. Winkle's counterfeit presentment fetched £23 ; . . . the admirable Sam, £64 (and *how* we cheered him !) ; and the beaming Mr. Pickwick himself, £69.

"No living Englishman for certain, and perhaps no Englishman of the future, will ever see such a sale again."

The above selections provide yet another proof of Dickens's prodigious contemporary fame. Reading them seventy-one years after his death in a magazine which has been exclusively devoted for thirty-seven years to the subject of his Life and Works and shows no signs of exhausting its stock of information and comment, one realises that time has set its seal upon a name and a fame that will endure.

## FRIENDS OF THE DICKENS HOUSE

In the corresponding number last year we published the first list of Donations and Annual Subscriptions. If your Annual Subscription has not been renewed, please send it without delay to the Assistant Secretary, Miss Minards, at Red House Farm, Wilstead, Beds. If you are not an annual subscriber, please become one to-day ! Funds are urgently needed.

# A DICKENSIAN GENERAL KNOWLEDGE PAPER

1. How old is the Dickens Fellowship ?
2. Where are the majority of Dickens's Manuscripts to be seen ?
3. In what work do Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller make another appearance ?
4. Who brought everything to a grindstone and sharpened it ?
5. What was the name of the play written by Dickens for Macready but never acted by him ?
6. In what books do these characters appear : (*a*) Sloppy, (*b*) Paragon, (*c*) Hawler, (*d*) Tattycoram, (*e*) Sparkins ?
7. What character called orange peel the poor surgeon's friend ?
8. How many visits did Dickens make to America ?
9. Whose way of forming a mind was to prevent it from forming opinions ?
10. Where was Amy Dorrit born ?
11. By what other names were the following characters known : (*a*) Rokesmith, (*b*) Tony Jobling ?
12. Whose apartments commanded " an uninterrupted view of—of over the way " and were " within a minute's walk of—of the corner of the street " ?
13. What was the occupation of the lady described as " Comely, dimpled, plump, and tight as a gooseberry " ?
14. Who was the character of whom " no one knew his Christian name " ?
15. Where lived : (*a*) Mrs. Gamp, (*b*) Mrs. Raddle, (*c*) the Plornish family, (*d*) Mrs. Macstinger, (*e*) Mrs. Bardell, (*f*) Miss Havisham ?
16. Complete the following : (*a*) All taps is——; (*b*) A world of gammon and ——; (*c*) —— must be maintained ; (*d*) Vidth and —— always grows together.
17. Who was obsessed by King Charles's Head ?
18. What were the names of the Smallweed twins ?
19. What river gives its name to three characters in one book ?
20. Where did Mr. Pickwick once say he was " suspended " ?
21. What place was called a Hall up in London because it " sounded better " ?
22. Who considered it " the grand thing " to " look about you " ?
23. What, according to Mr. F's Aunt, are the predominating feature of the Dover Road ?
24. Who was described as having " two mile o' danger at eightpence " ?
25. What was the true business precept of Jonas Chuzzlewit ?
26. How did the Friendly Waiter address David Copperfield ?
27. When did Miss Flite expect a Judgment ?
28. Who was the second employer of Bailey Junior ?
29. How many Christmas Books did Dickens write ?
30. Give the continuation of the title of *The Haunted Man.*
31. What was the familiar name of Harriet Beadle ?
32. What were the two names of Paul Dombey's foster mother ?
33. Who was a pupil at the Charitable Grinders ?
34. Name the steamer taking Martin Chuzzlewit to America.
35. What lady was courted from the footboard of a cart ?
36. Who was the lady of uncertain age and a wooden appearance, but " a very good sort of fellow " ?

*(Answers will be printed in the next number.)*

# ON THE ROAD WITH THE TRENTS

By T. KENT BRUMLEIGH

A RECENT re-reading of *The Old Curiosity Shop* has aroused many thoughts that shew how Dickens's work gains interest with each perusal, and some of these thoughts I should like to share with other Dickens lovers.

## I.—Prelude to the Wanderings

The old Grandfather's loss of all his property through borrowing money from Quilp to indulge his love of gambling, brought on a raging fever, from which after many weeks he began to mend by very slow and feeble degrees. Gradually he was able to go out for short walks with Nelly hand-in-hand. On a certain Thursday evening a change came over him and he was enabled to converse intelligently, but he sat quite still till the sun went down. This would be about half-past eight in the evening as the month was June.* When it was night Nell put him to bed, say, at nine o'clock. He had slept for some hours soundly, but she was yet busily engaged in preparing for their flight, including in her packing a staff to support his feeble steps. Then she visited the old rooms for the last time, though how she did this in the dark we do not know. All this must have taken her at least two hours, say till 11 o'clock. Then she sat at the window for a while, say till 11.30. Then she wept over her little bird, which we must suppose was fast asleep (was it a canary or a linnet ?) before retiring to bed—not to sleep but to dream—till she awoke to find that it was yet night with the stars still shining brightly. When the day began to glimmer, say about three o'clock, she arose and dressed for the journey, but did not call her grandfather till after the sun rose, which would be nearly four o'clock. They crept out of the house leaving Quilp and Brass snoring. The streets were nearly free from passengers ; there was a glad silence. They had had no breakfast nor anything in the way of liquid refreshment, so we can conclude that it was between 4.30 and 5 o'clock.

One's natural reflection on these data is at the extraordinary resilience both of Little Nell, who only had four hours' broken slumber after a long day of nursing, finishing with the responsibility of packing a few articles of clothing for him and herself, which *she* would have to carry, and of her grandfather, an invalid not fully recovered, who found six-and-a-half hours' rest sufficient preparation for a six-mile walk before they had a frugal breakfast by the roadside.

## II.—The Wanderings. Part I: London to Warwick

There have been several attempts to trace the route pursued by Nell and her grandfather across England, and of these I accept Mr. Dexter's as the most probable, although it presents one or two difficulties, as Dickens gives no name of any place on the way, nor any

* Greenwich Mean Time, of course, in all cases throughout the article.

directions except the mention of the Black Country and a canal. We assume on the evidence of Archdeacon Lloyd that the end of the journey was Tong, although even this name is not given in the book.

If the pair covered twenty miles to Uxbridge on the first day it is not to be wondered at that the next morning they were "jaded at first and very tired" and often had to take short spells of rest. By five o'clock they had walked about twenty miles to Wendover, and Nelly's foot was blistered and sore, but after a hearty meal went on for another mile, when a carter gave them a lift for four miles to a market town (Aylesbury), which they reached as the sun was setting, say about eight o'clock or a little after. Here in the churchyard they encountered Codlin and Short. Nelly helped to repair Judy's dress, "accomplishing it to a miracle"—a very appropriate word as one wonders how she managed to see her stitches in the deepening twilight. Tired as she must have been she sat by the old man's bed till he fell asleep before she sought her own couch, and even then she found time to open the window to see the church in the moonlight.

On the third day Nell was up betimes, before the old man woke. This would be not later than seven o'clock as breakfast would be at eight or eight-thirty. Nelly's blistered foot is forgotten, and "they made a long day's journey and were yet upon the road when the moon was shining in the sky" and "the night was damp and cold." This would be about nine o'clock. In all they had walked during the day about sixteen miles to the "Jolly Sandboys," where Codlin had gone on ahead and secured for them accommodation for the night. Here at Buckingham they enjoyed that "wonderful stew of tripe, and cow-heel, and bacon, and steak, and peas, cauliflowers, new potatoes, and sparrow-grass, all working up together in one delicious gravy." They must have arrived at the inn about nine o'clock as the "moon had disappeared behind heavy clouds" and they arrived "drenched." A change of slippers and some dry garments, together with the warmth and comfort of the chimney corner lulled Nelly and her grandfather to sleep before the famous stew which was timed by the landlord to be served at "twenty-two minutes before eleven," a fairly late hour for a "child." During supper came the performance of Jerry's dogs, and after supper Mr. Vuffin arrived, and then finally "the weary child prevailed upon her grandfather to retire"—at midnight or very little earlier.

On the fourth day they made a "very early" start after an unceremonious and scrambling breakfast, the child's misgivings about the behavior of Codlin and Short making her "anxious and uneasy." After a seventeen mile walk it was dark, say nine-thirty o'clock, before they reached the town, Banbury, where the racing was, and they walked through the town a further mile to the racecourse, where, after a scanty supper, they fell to sleep in a tent.

On the fifth day Nelly arose soon after sunrise, say about four o'clock, to gather posies to sell on the course to the race crowd, as she had only a few halfpence left (except a piece of gold sewn up in her dress). Late in the day they fled from the racecourse as the bell

was ringing to clear the course ; if it was for the last race this might be about five o'clock. They went on till " they were quite exhausted," then rested in a wood through which they passed, and three miles (by the finger-post) brought them to a village (Warmington, with less than 400 inhabitants), where they sought refuge for the night in the school-house. The assumed distance for the day, between five o'clock and bedtime, is five miles, but it does not seem far enough ; they would not be " quite exhausted " after a two-mile walk although they had stood about on the racecourse all day.

On the sixth day they stayed all day with the schoolmaster, Nelly doing the housework and her own needlework (what was she making ?) and the old man dozing in the sun, till bedtime. The next morning saw them on the road again, the schoolmaster refusing any payment for his hospitality. So Nelly had a small sum still in her purse, realized by the sale of her flowers at the race meeting, as well as the piece of gold sewn in her dress. " Main roads stretch a long, long way " and " the afternoon had worn away into a beautiful evening " —it must have been six o'clock—when they reached Gaydon at tea-time, only six miles all day. Here they found Mrs. Jarley, who told them that the next town, Warwick, was eight miles further on, and gave them a lift there, arriving at " near midnight." Here it was that Nelly saw Quilp in the moonlight at half-past twelve " by the chimes."

This is the end of the first part of the wanderings as we leave Nell acting as showman for the Wax-work, and the old man dusting the figures, taking the checks, etc., in return for board and lodging, in addition to which the only money they got was Nelly's " various little fees "—what we should call tips. Nelly was happy, had no cause for anxiety, and kept the family purse.

### III.—The Wanderings. Part II : In One Place

Nothing is heard of the Grandfather's craze for gambling after they left London, until they had been with Mrs. Jarley for some time, when one evening during a walk they came to the " Valiant Soldier " public house, where he threw off his listless childishness and became eager and energetic in order to play with a group of cardsharpers. He took Nelly's purse—" rather a light purse "—and that, in three hours, was by twelve-thirty exhausted. Three hours seems rather a long time for cardsharpers to clear out the few shillings which was all the old man could have had. Little Nell then had to break into her piece of gold to pay for a night's board and lodging, and it was raining hard. This must have been about one o'clock in the morning. In the night the old man robbed Nelly of all her change. In her distress the child sat up all night.

The school holiday season (say August) came and went. Nelly and her grandfather gradually became somewhat estranged as he insisted on her giving him every penny for his gambling. Was it worth the cardsharpers while to play night after night for the sake of fleecing

the old man of his small change ? Think how microscopical must the stakes have been. Everything disappeared, and then she found out that he had undertaken to rob Mrs. Jarley, and decided to flee in the night, leading the old man away. " The moon rose in all her gentle glory," so it must have been well after full moon and about midnight. " The whole burden of their two lives had fallen on her, and she must think and act for both," as apparently all sense of morality had left the old man's character.

### IV.—The Wanderings. Part III : Warwick to Tong.

" The night crept on, the moon went down (it wouldn't, having so recently risen in all its gentle glory), the sun rose up," and on the first day they slept in its genial warmth on the bank of a canal and got a passage on a barge. Nelly had only a few pence left and, to keep the tipsy bargees in a good humour, sang all night simple ditties which she had learned in happier times. The next day they spent on the barge and landed in the afternoon in heavy rain at Birmingham. Having no shelter they gradually, as evening came on, " shivered with cold and damp " in the wet streets, and were given cover by the keeper of a furnace who allowed Nelly to sleep on the hot ashes. In the morning the fireman shared with them his coffee and coarse bread and gave Nelly twopence as they were penniless.

So they started off again, Nelly suffering with sore feet and pains all over her from the wet of the previous day. They walked all day and spent the night in the open, having had no nourishment but a penny loaf between them. Morning came, and they resumed their wanderings. During the day they spent their last penny on another loaf, but by this time Nelly was too ill to eat, and the old man finished it up greedily. Evening was drawing on but had not closed in—say, at six o'clock—as they came to Wolverhampton, where Nell, at the end of her tether, fainted in the street, to be picked up by the Warmington schoolmaster on his way to a new appointment at Tong ; he carried Nell to a small inn where she was cared for, all the charges being met by himself.

All the next day they stayed at the inn for Nelly to be nursed and to rest, and in the evening of the following day a stage waggon travelling all night gave the child a " soothing, luxurious, drowsy " sleep, grandfather and the schoolmaster walking on beside the driver, although by now Nelly was sufficiently recovered to find strength to take an occasional walk with the driver so as to give the old man or the schoolmaster the chance of a short rest in the waggon.

The following morning early they reached Shifnal (deduced from the description in the narrative), where they spent the night, and on the next day " began to draw near their place of destination." There were only four miles to go, but they decided to spend another night on the road, and on " a fine clear autumn morning " came safely to the end of the journey. The village was Tong, as all the commentators are agreed, and as Dickens himself indicated, and here the schoolmaster

was to earn £35 a year, as apparently Dickens did not want him to compete with Goldsmith's village-schoolmaster who was "passing rich with forty pounds a year."

[NOTE.—If we assume that the day the wanderers started from London was the 15th of June,—the book says "a day in June; the deep blue sky unsullied by a cloud"—they reached Warwick on June 23rd. If, again we assume that the day of their arrival at Tong—a fine clear autumn morning—was October 15th, they must have left Warwick on October 6th. They were therefore employed by Mrs. Jarley from June 23rd to October 6th—more than three months.]

*(To be concluded)*

## THE CHARLES DICKENS REST CENTRE

THE "repose about Lant Street in the Borough that sheds a gentle melancholy on the soul" has not been too well maintained of late, for Lant Street, in common with less famous London thoroughfares, has had its quota of hectic nights these last few months. Some of the needs of the population resulting from such nights have, in this region, been catered for in Lant Street by one of innumerable Rest Centres scattered throughout London for the emergency sheltering and feeding of those suddenly rendered homeless by enemy action. This one is possibly no more memorable than many of its fellows, but it is called The Charles Dickens Rest Centre, and therefore merits some record in *The Dickensian*. Many readers will remember the building as The Charles Dickens School which saw an annual Christmas feast provided for the scholars by the Dickens Fellowship.

Here at the start of the intensified raids upon London, one Monday morning in September, 1940, Mr. H. F. Gaul arrived at the empty and evacuated school house to take charge, entirely without institutional experience of any kind, to find a long queue of homeless people awaiting admission to be fed and housed until more permanent homes could be found for them. Since that date Mr. Gaul and his staff, many of them voluntary, have received 2250 fugitives from battered and demolished homes. Did any more pitiful and humanitarian work than this ever bear the name of Charles Dickens?

L. C. S.

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## THE REALITY OF MR. PICKWICK

"ONLY a few isolated figures in letters stand out as real; Sir Roger de Coverley, I suppose, Mr. Pickwick certainly, and, of course, Sherlock Holmes, who should have had his statue erected in Baker Street before ever Kensington Gardens were dedicated to Peter Pan; most of us could name a dozen, chosen with a certain amount of individual caprice, but hardly more of such characters.

"Such characters, I mean, as create a real illusion; so that a man attaining Heaven might look round him and say, 'And now, where's Pickwick? Oh, no, I forgot; of course, he's only a character in a book.'"—*From* "A Ramble in Barsetshire; Essays in Satire," by Fr. Ronald Knox, 1928.

# CHRISTCHURCH EXAMINES *BARNABY RUDGE?*

THE following were among the questions set at recent meetings of the Christchurch (N.Z.) Branch. Certain members were detailed to prepare the answers, and the branch finds it an excellent way of familiarising the members with the book for the season.

1. The setting of the opening chapters is melodramatic. In which passages is there created an atmosphere of suspense and mystery?
2. From the introduction given to the various characters (Chs. 1-8), which do you consider will become the most important ones ?
3. What qualities in Sim Tappertit and Miss Miggs are revealed in the window scene in Chapter 9 ?
4. " Let us be moral." Discuss Mr. Chester's standards of morality as shown in the interview with his son (Ch. 15).
5. In a phrase or short passage from the Chapters 25-30 give examples of (*a*) humour, (*b*) sarcasm, (*c*) description, (*d*) pathos.
6. What weaknesses in Mrs. Varden's character did Chester play upon when he visited her ? To what extent do you consider her a typical woman character ?
7. What part does the weather play in Chapter 33 ?
8. In Chapter 35 we are introduced to the three chief instigators of the Gordon riots, Lord George Gordon, John Grueby, and Gashford —an incongruous trio. What do you think brought them together ?
9. Mr. Dennis swore that the arts of reading and writing were the greatest possible curse the civilised community could know (Ch. 38). Comment on this.
10. How do you reconcile the description of Sir John Chester : " The old face, calm and fresh as ever," with the portrayal of his character as shown in his meditations before the fire ? (Ch. 40).

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## IN HIS OWN COUNTRY

THE seventy-first anniversary of the death of Dickens was observed in Rochester by a special sermon by the Dean (Bishop E. M. Blackie) in the course of which he said : I have been asking myself what kind of things Dickens would have been thinking and saying had he lived in these tremendous days. There were plenty of tragedies when he was alive, and he had been brought up to know something of the hardness of life and to hate tyranny, injustice, and oppression. If he had been living at this time he would have spoken with words of fire against the evil forces at present at work in the world—words of righteous anger against tyranny. He would also have let his glorious sense of humour play upon the present times and help the people to laugh. Laughter could not win great victories, but it could help to strengthen people who were fighting for what they believed to be right. He was a man of tremendous human sympathies, and they were always aroused, particularly when he saw humanity suffering. Dickens to-day would have encouraged us to be men and women in the truest sense. He might not have preached a sermon in the ordinary sense, but he would have spoken in the words of St. Paul, " Love one another." He would be encouraging people to redeem the hardness of life by showing its very opposite. Dickens is not with us in the flesh, but we can feel he is with us in the spirit, giving us lessons which we need in these anxious times.